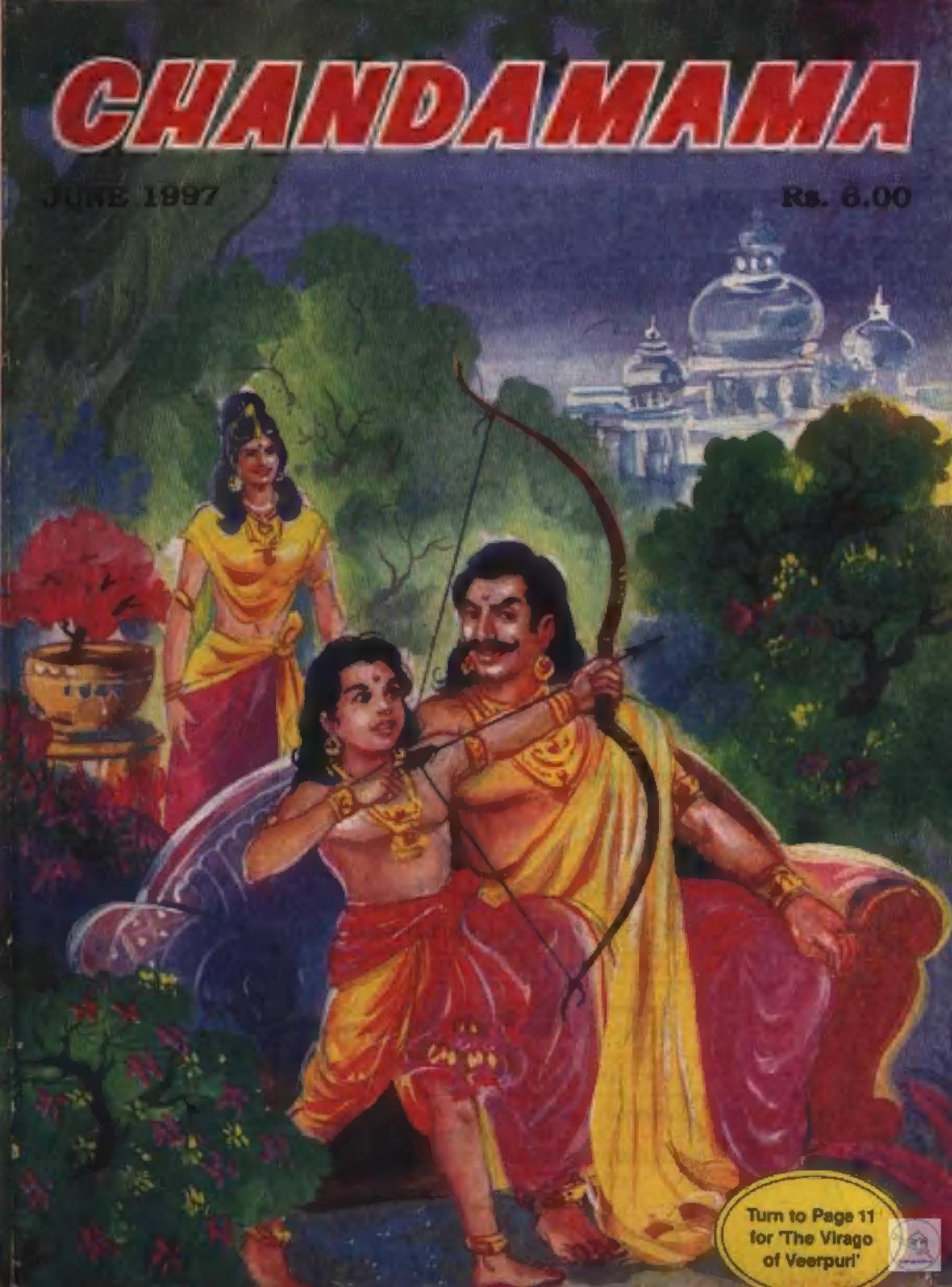


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MAHABHARATA: Sanjaya, sent by King Dhritarashtra to the Pandavas, returns to Hastinapura and reveals the message he carries. If it is true ultimately, Arjuna has decided to punish Duryodhana and his brothers; Bhima is all set to destroy the Kaurava army; Nakula and Sahadeva have ensured the support of redoubtable warriors. Bhishma advises Duryodhana to stop the war. Drona advocates peace with the Pandavas. Duryodhana exudes confidence. What next?

THE VIRAGO OF VEERPURI: Vijay-krishna and Vajreshwari, son and daughter of Army Commander Marthandvarma, go out hunting. Vajreshwari enters a cave. After a search, her brother goes back to inform everybody that Vajreshwari is missing. The girl walks through a long tunnel that takes her to another kingdom, where she is held captive by a wizard, who is in the employ of the king. He is unaware of the presence of Vajreshwari. The wizard uses the girl to push forth his plans to ascend the throne of Veerpuri. For that he must secure the help of none other than Marthandvarma, whose antecedents he is aware of.

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Founder: CHAKRAPANI
Controlling Editor : NAGI REDDI

Education for All

The months of June and July will see schools in India reopening for the new academic year. Most of them had closed admission even before they broke off for the summer vacation, and as such any exercise of new admission will be very minimal in these two months. No one will be surprised if millions of children do not find themselves in classrooms but elsewhere—either lazing at home or trying to make an earning at hotels, factories, or similar places where they can get work.

So much so, the slogan "Education for all" either stares at us in cold print or is heard of in halls while erudite scholars, social workers, and other protectors of human rights freely exchange their views how to convert the three-word slogan into a reality.

But this is what has actually been happening in India all the fifty years since we took over ruling the country ourselves and forty-five years after we solemnly affirmed in our Constitution that we would ensure "free and compulsory education for ALL CHILDREN until they complete 14 years".

We have not been able to implement this part of the Constitution. But have we any excuses? However, there are reasons aplenty. Like, children have to go for work and earn money to supplement the income of their parents. Otherwise, they will not have a roof over their head, nor have clothes to wear, or enough food to eat. They will continue to live in poverty, and die in poverty. Children, especially in tribal areas, die like fireflies from malnutrition.

Therefore, unless a congenial atmosphere is created where children will not be forced to go for work, where their health needs will be met, where they are ensured of at least one square meal a day, the slogan will remain just another wishful thinking.



A WINDOW ON THE WORLD "NEW DAWN" IN BRITAIN

A 14-year-old boy of Scotland somehow could not brook the strict discipline he was subjected to in the public school that he went. He wanted to run away from home and go to Bahamas in the West Indies. He did not succeed. That was 30 years ago. Today he is living in No.10, Downing Street, which is the official residence of the British Prime Minister in London.

Now you would have guessed his name. Tony Blair. His Labour Party won a landslide victory in the General Elections held on May 1, and it was voted to power ending the 18-year-long rule by the Conservative Party, which mustered only 163 seats in the 659-seat House of Commons. The Labour Party won in 419 seats, while the Liberal Democrats were voted in 45 seats. Some other national parties and independents collected the rest of the seats.

Tony Blair was born in 1953 to Scottish parents who were lifelong members of the Conservative Party. After schooling, he was sent to Oxford University to study Law. St. John's College, which he entered, gave him relief from the narrow outlook that he had been forced to imbibe. He now shared modern ideas with his classmates and lecturers. He became a follower of

socialism, which was a stepping stone to his joining the Labour Party. Meanwhile, he took his degree in Trade Union Law with distinction. Mr. Blair practised as a Barrister for a few years before he was drawn to politics full time.

In 1983 he entered the Commons on a Labour ticket. He was then the youngest Member of Parliament. In 1992, the Labour Party formed a shadow Cabinet, in which he was given charge of Home. Soon he was made a member of the Party's National Executive and in 1994, he was elected leader of the Party—the 20th leader since the formation of the Party in 1906. In an opinion poll, 61 per cent voters chose him as the next Prime Minister, whereas Mr. John Major received only 21 per cent votes.

However, the historic success in the General Elections was beyond the Party's hopes. The Party was sure of victory, but it never expected the near tidal wave against the ruling Conservative Party.

When victory was in sight, Mr. Tony Blair told a rally outside his residence: "A new dawn has broken," adding: "We will set about doing the good, practical things that need to be done in this country—extending education to all our children, modernising our welfare state, and establishing a proper national health service."

Incidentally, Mr. Tony Blair at 43 has the distinction of being the youngest British Prime Minister in this century. In 1812, Lord Liverpool became Prime Minister when he was only 42.



FAITH IS THE HEALER



The royal physician of King Meghadatta suddenly took ill and was bed-ridden. The king was sad and worried, too, because any time he or the royal family might need the physician's service. Meghadatta sent for his minister. "What shall we do? The physician doesn't seem to have a cure for his illness. I think we must make him agree to see a doctor, and if he agrees, please arrange for a doctor to examine him."

"There's no dearth of doctors in our kingdom, your majesty!" said the minister. "Every street has one doctor or two, but the problem is, who would be capable of curing the royal physician? Why not we make an announcement and offer a reward to anyone who will cure him?"

The announcement was duly made.

A few days passed. No one came forward in response to the announcement. The king waited with anxiety; the minister waited expectantly. Ten days went by. On the eleventh day, a doctor called Anandtheertha presented himself at the court, where he met the minister. "I'm a physician and I've come to examine the royal physician and cure him of his illness."

The minister took him to the royal physician. While he examined him and elicited details of his illness and the kind of medicines he had taken, he asked the young doctor: "Who taught you medicine?"

"My teacher is Govindacharya," replied Anandtheertha. "He and you studied in the same *gurukul*, didn't you? He has told me a lot about you."

"So, you're a student of



Govindacharya!" A smile came over the face of the royal physician. "Does he still remember me? Did he send you here?"

"No, it is not he who sent me here," confessed Anandtheertha. "I had just concluded my training under him and I was returning to my place when I heard the royal announcement. I thought I was getting an opportunity to treat the royal physician himself!"

"All right, now I'm your patient, and you're my doctor," said the royal physician. "You may diagnose my malady and prescribe medicines and start my treatment. After all, you're my classmate's student. I've complete faith in you."

Anandtheertha treated him for a full week, and the royal physician was completely cured of his illness. The king who was all the while watching the progress of recovery with anxiety, was now very happy. He made this remark to his minister: "Anandtheertha appears to be quite

smart and capable. Why not we take him into our service? Let the royal physician rest for some months. What do you say?"

"Let's not take a hasty decision, your majesty," said the minister. "We would better consult Anandtheertha."

Meghadatta accepted the Minister's suggestion and sent for Anandtheertha. When he was ushered into their presence, the minister told him of the king's wish. "The royal physician, your majesty, has nothing more to learn in medicine. He has great knowledge of diseases and their treatment. He can prescribe medicines for everybody else, but when it comes to treating himself, he will have doubts. That's only natural, though not because he is lacking in knowledge. I'm no match to him in such knowledge."

The king praised Anandtheertha's sincerity and integrity. He rewarded him suitably and made him an assistant to the royal physician.





THE VIRAGO OF VEERPURI

The story so far: King Soorasen of Veerpuri and Queen Suryaprabha were overjoyed. They have been blessed with a son after they have visited all the temples in their kingdom. Almost at the same time, the wives of Prime Minister Bodheshwar and the Army Commander Marthandvarma have given birth to daughters. The king has cause for worry because the royal astrologer has predicted a period of turmoil for Veerpuri if the Prime Minister and the Army Commander were to get daughters. Soorasen takes great care over the upbringing of Prince Veerasen. How will the girls grow up?

When the royal astrologer returned from the neighbouring Senapuri after preparing the horoscope of the newborn prince there, he was given the message that King Soorasen had sent for him. A full week had since passed, and he wondered what could have been the urgency. Anyway he rushed to the palace and was immediately ushered into the presence of the king.

"Did you hear...?" the king asked him, excitedly.

"Hear what, your majesty?" queried the astrologer calmly.

".... that Bodheshwar and Marthand, both have daughters born to them?" the king completed the sentence that he had begun.

"Is that so?" said Goswami Maharaj rather casually.

"But, Maharaj, you remember the



"prediction you made, don't you?" the king helped him recollect their conversation days earlier.

"Of course, your majesty!" said the astrologer, trying to put him at ease. "The girls will take some time to grow up, won't they? We needn't start worrying now!"

"True, Maharaj," said Soorasen, now calming down. "It may be too early to say how they'll shape out. Still, if you can look into their planetary influences, we can be on the guard. Don't you think so?"

"No doubt about it, your majesty," said Goswami Maharaj. "I shall meet both of them and get details about their daughters, and look into their birth-charts. For the time being,

nothing should worry you, your majesty."



Goswami Maharaj was received with great reverence at the residence of Prime Minister Bodheshwar. A visit by the royal astrologer was nothing unusual, but it was not expected so soon after the birth of a baby. "I was planning to bring my daughter to you for your blessings, Maharaj!" said Bodheshwar half-apologetically. "Now that you've come, we feel doubly blessed! I heard you were away in Senapuri. How's our good friend Mahendravarma?"

As they sat down and the astrologer described his visit to the neighbouring kingdom, the Prime Minister's wife, Bhuvaneshwari, brought the baby to be shown to Goswami Maharaj. Their elder daughter was with her. The astrologer took the baby's hands into his and was seen chanting a *mantra*. He then pulled out a tiny box from the bag he had with him, opened it and took a pinch of *sindoor* and applied it on the baby's forehead. "She's a lovely child!" he remarked, patting her cheek. "And how're you, little lady?" he asked, keeping his hands on the girl's head, as if to bless her. The three-year-old girl touched his feet in obeisance. "What's your name?"

"Bhanupriya," replied the girl coyly.

"Maharaj, please suggest a name for our baby," pleaded the Prime

Minister's wife:

"Ah! Bhanumati will make a good sister for Bhanupriya!" said Goswami Maharaj. He turned to the girl and asked, "Do you like her name?"

Bhanupriya merely nodded as she moved closer to the baby and her mother.

Bodheshwar was anxious to know what was in store for the newborn according to the planetary positions. He and Goswami Maharaj sat together for a long time discussing the various aspects. The astrologer assured the Prime Minister that he could foresee a bright future for his daughter and like him, she would have a role to play in the administration of the land. On hearing this, Bodheshwar was very happy. "Please accept this humble gift from me and Bhuvaneshwari!"

he said, as he adorned the astrologer with a richly-embroidered shawl.

As the Army Commander was away on an inspection of the borders, Goswami Maharaj waited till he returned to the capital. On his visit, he was received with all courtesies by Marthandvarma. "Maharaj, you shouldn't have taken the trouble of coming all the way," said the Commander politely. "You could have sent word, and I myself would have called on you. As you've come, I would request you to cast a horoscope of my daughter."

"I did hear about the birth of a baby girl to you," said Goswami Maharaj. "You must be happy that you now have a daughter after a son. That augurs well for the family," he added.





"Is that so, Maharaj?" There was no smile on Marthand's face. "Ever since the baby came, her mother has been ill, and I'm worried about her health. That's why I want you to look into the baby's horoscope and tell me what her fate is going to be. Also, when her mother will recover from her illness."

Goswami Maharaj pulled out a neat bundle of palmyrah leaves from his bag and untied it on the table. He then began drawing a diagram and writing some letters and figures in the columns, all the while making some calculations by his fingers. "There's no immediate cause for worry, Commander, though it may take some time for the mother to recover fully. I

suggest that you make a special offering to goddess Lokeshwari, and she will certainly bless both mother and daughter. How's your son?"

"By the grace of Lokeshwari, he's half and healthy," replied Marthandvarma. "I only hope his mother will be all right by the time we celebrate his third birthday."

"When will that be?" queried the astrologer.

"That'll come off in another two months," replied the Commander. "You must join us in the celebrations."

Goswami Maharaj accepted the invitation and took leave of Marthandvarma.



The birthday of young Vijaykrishna was not celebrated because his mother passed away suddenly. Goswami Maharaj attributed the tragedy to the malefic influences of the planets at the time of the birth of Vajreshwari — that was the name given to Marthandvarma's baby daughter — and realised that she would have to grow without the care and affection of a mother.

King Soorasen and Queen Suryaprabha decided that they would send one of the senior maids-in-waiting to the Army Commander's residence to take care of the baby.



The next three or four years were uneventful for Veerpuri. King Soorasen thought it prudent to give

whatever education and training in arms the young prince needed at the palace itself and in his immediate presence, instead of sending him to any *ashram* far away. He invited two learned *pundits* in the kingdom to stay in the palace and take care of the prince, while he himself supervised Veersen's physical training. The little prince soon became an adept in the use of the bow and arrow, sword and dagger, and also in wrestling.

One day, the king was showing Veersen how to handle the sword. They had been practising for long hours and were a little tired. They sat down on one of the benches in the garden. Soon they were joined by Queen Suryapraba. "My lord! Isn't it time for you to come inside? You must have been out for long, and I

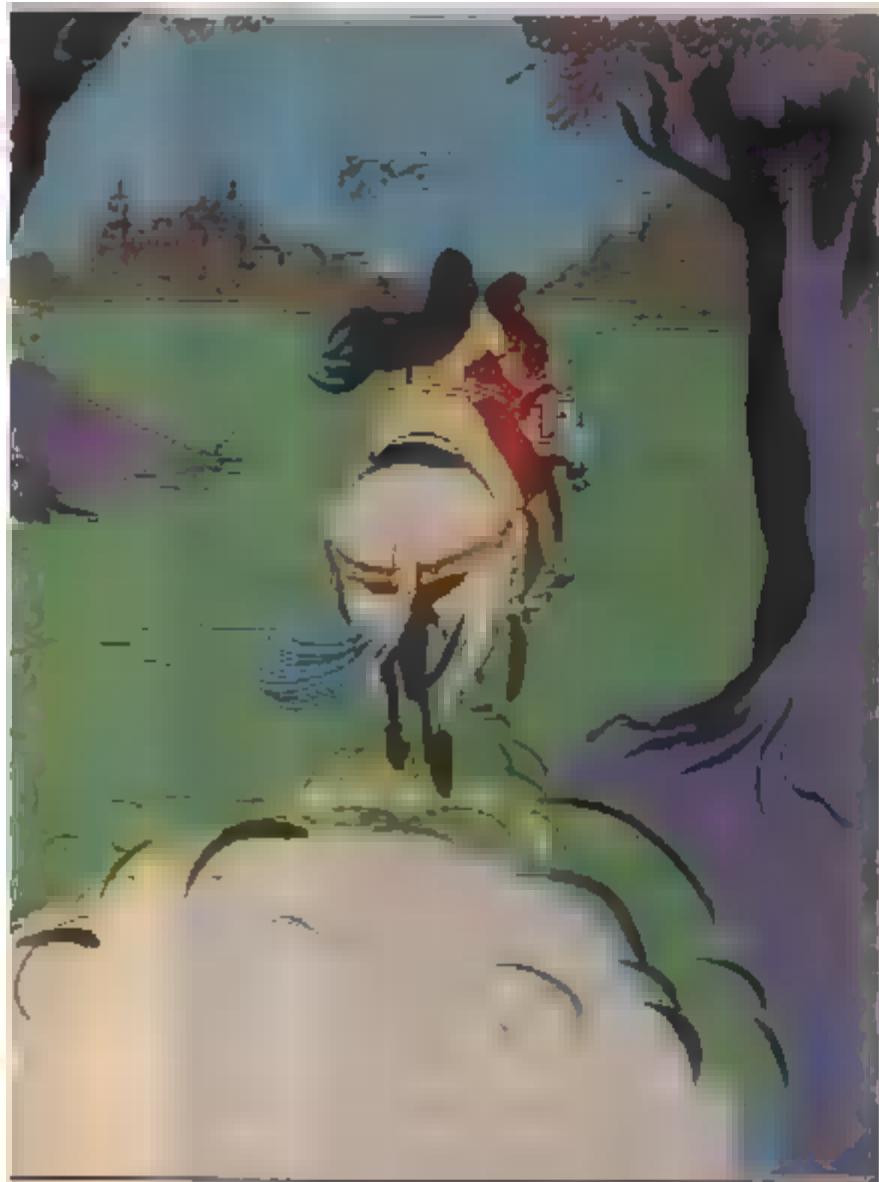
forgot you had gone away to the garden. Mandakini had come from Marthandvarma's residence and she was with me telling — all about Vajreshwari."

The moment the name was mentioned, the king was alert. "What did she say about the Commander's daughter? How's the girl?"

"Vajreshwari appears to be all right," replied Suryapraba. "She doesn't ask much about her mother, probably because she lost her when she was just a baby. And she doesn't care if her father is away from home. She takes after her brother and they spend a lot of time together, even roaming the forests whenever Marthandvarma is away."

"She must be daring like her brother," commented King Soorasen.





"I only hope she won't get into any trouble. Good that we get news about her from Mandakini."

At the Army Commander's residence, Vajreshwari found in her brother, Vijaykrishna, an ideal companion. The two of them would often resort to the sprawling garden around their palatial house and escape the vigilant eyes of the servants and maids and the Commander's guards, especially when Marthandvarma used to be away for long hours, sometimes even for days together. The two indulged in hazardous adventures in which Vajreshwari exhibited equal bravado.

Once they were caught in a sudden storm when they were riding on horse-

back inside the forest. They could not find any shelter. They dismounted and were leading their horses to a safe place when a huge rock got dislodged and rolled down hitting Vijaykrishna and his horse. Both of them fell down and were injured. The young man was unconscious for some time, and Vajreshwari wanted to take her brother back as quick as possible. She did not wait for the storm to abate. She managed to put him on her horse and herself mounted the horse and rode fast holding her brother tight, so that he would not fall from the horse. As the rain fell on his face, he came back to his senses by the time they reached their place. When Marthandvarma was informed about their adventure, he did not show his displeasure but praised his daughter for her presence of mind.

It was not as if Marthandvarma had failed to notice the way his daughter was growing — more like a boy than a girl. He used to call for the matron sent by the queen, to ask her about his daughter. She would merely say that all her needs and desires were being met and that nothing was being denied to the growing-up girl. Of course, she told him how Vajreshwari spent most of her time with her brother and how they would sometimes be missing for hours together. She did not find anything amiss in this, as the girl never gave her a chance to feel anxious about her or her safety.

Marthandvarma thought that it would not be advisable to put any curbs on his daughter's behaviour or habits, but he would be indulgent only till she grew up into a young woman. He did not find anything unusual whenever King Soorasen made it a point to enquire after his daughter. In fact, he only felt happy that the king was taking some interest in Vajreshwari and her upbringing. After all, the queen had taken the trouble of sparing the services of her own maid-in-waiting to look after Vajreshwari.

Meanwhile, both Bhanupriya and Bhanumati, too, were growing up, giving great joy to their parents, especially because both were equally good-looking and well behaved in their manners. In those times, girls were not being accepted in any ashram or *gurukulam*. So, Bodheshwar had arranged for their education at home with the help of musicians, dancers, artists, and craftsmen. The sisters grew

up into beautiful young women, accomplished in different arts. The Prime Minister used to feel elated whenever King Soorasen asked him how his daughters were faring. Would one of them become deserving of the hand of Prince Veersen? he wondered.

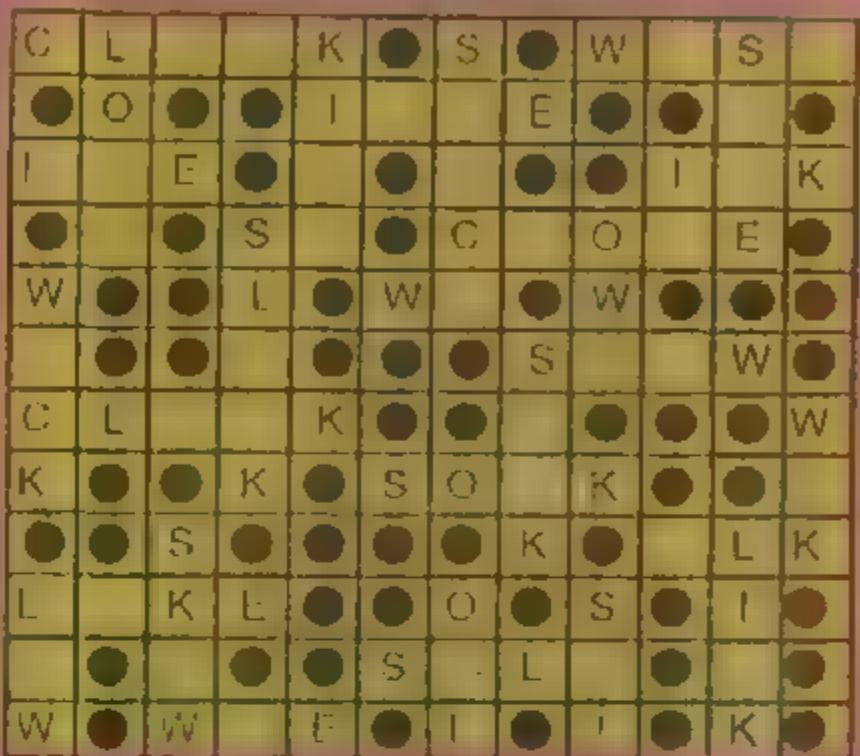
Suddenly, the calm prevailing over Veerpuri was shattered. Vijaykrishna and Vajreshwari had gone into the forest for hunting, and the young man came back alone, saying his sister was missing. Their father was away at that time. So, word was taken to the Prime Minister who, in turn, informed King Soorasen. He sent his own guards to the forest to search for the girl. After Marthandvarma returned to the capital, he asked his soldiers to comb the forest, but they all came back only to tell the Army Commander that the girl seemed to have disappeared without a trace. Where was Vajreshwari?

(To continue)



American Puzzle

**Find 30 words from the single word
'CLOCK WISE'**



Clues

2 letter words - 3

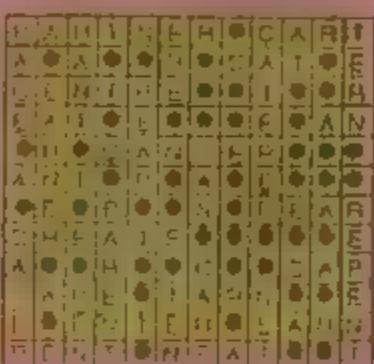
3 letter words - 9

4 letter words -13

5 letter words - 5

Total words 30

Last month solution

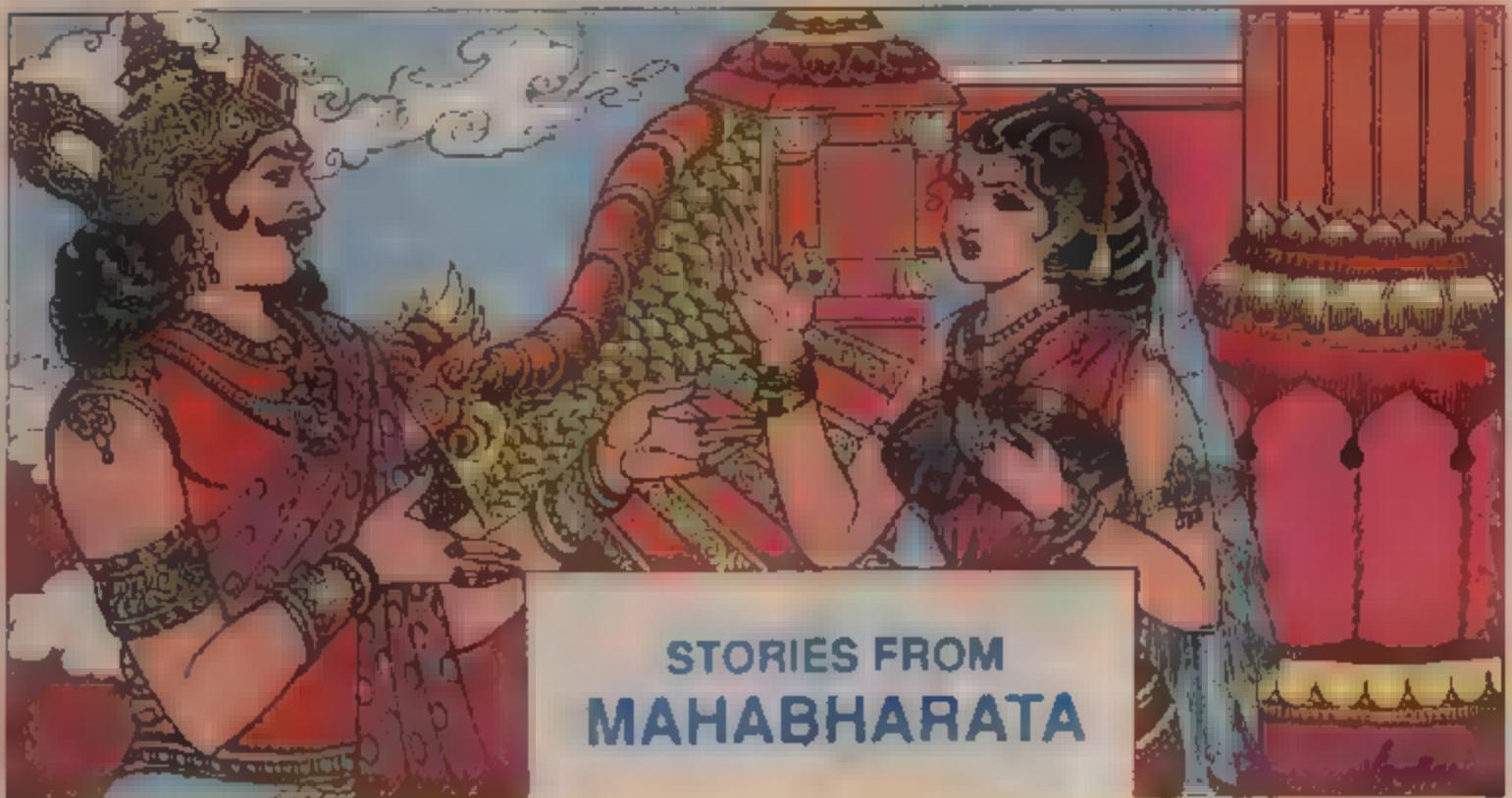


ROSS WORD

BUCKET



Using the picture clues make connecting words



STORIES FROM MAHABHARATA

The story so far: The Pandava princes who had undergone years of exile, with all its sufferings and privations, rightly demand that they should now be given back their inheritance of the Kingdom of Indraprastha. But the Kauravas, headed by the scheming and arrogant Duryodhana, are intent on depriving the Pandavas of everything. Instead of listening to the counsel of the venerable Bhishma and Vidura, Duryodhana only listens to the wily Shakuni ■ is ready to meet the Pandavas on the battle-field.

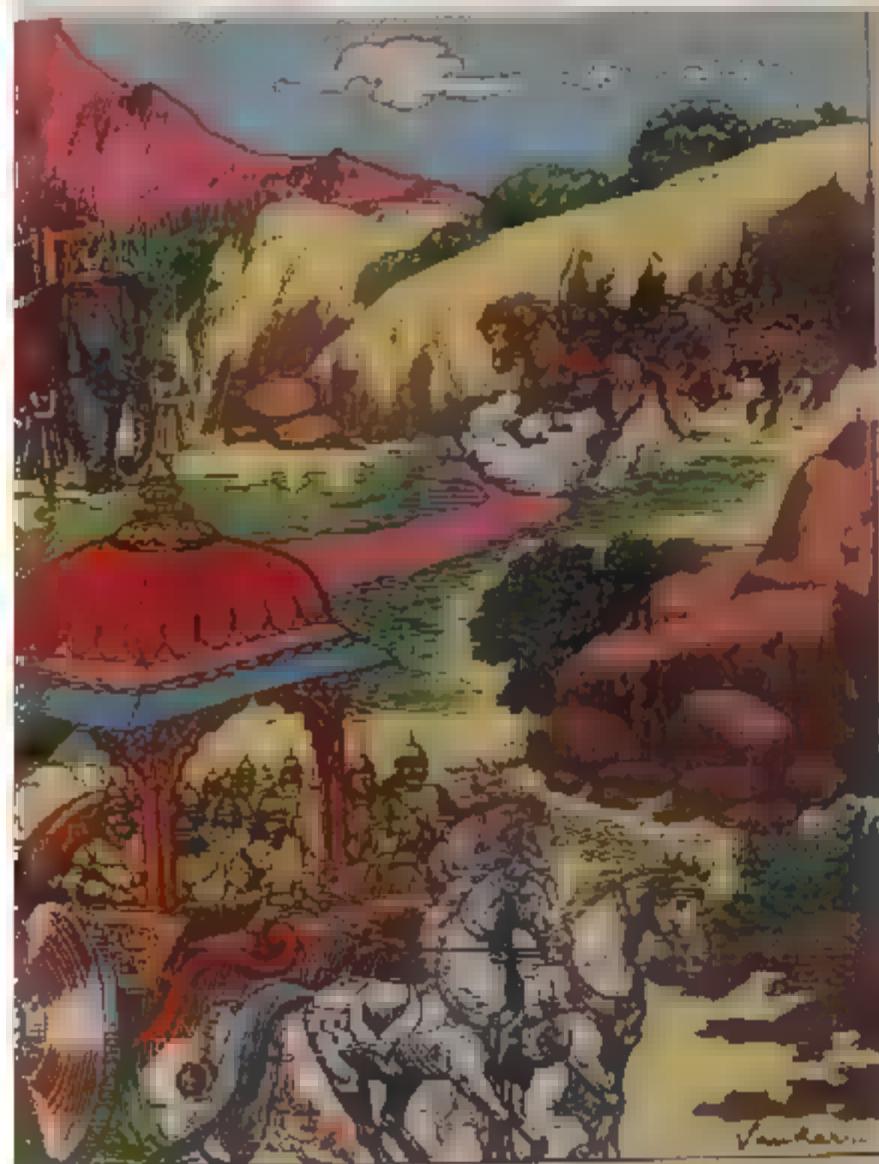
Power corrupts and the one who gets a taste of it forgets his past. He becomes arrogant and stupid. So it was with Nahusha. Having attained the highest position in all the three spheres, he began to behave like a bully. He even cast covetous eyes on Sachidevi, Indra's queen.

When she became aware of his evil intentions, she took refuge with Brihaspati, the wise teacher of the gods. Nahusha, angry at this, began to threaten the sage. Soon there was ■ division in the ranks of the sages and hermits. Some spoke in favour of

Nahusha, some against his attitude. Brihaspati firmly refused to hand over Sachidevi to Nahusha.

When Nahusha's anger reached alarming proportions, the wise teacher of the gods decided to teach him a lesson.

One day, to Nahusha's great joy, Sachidevi arrived at his place and spoke to him. "Lord, as long as my husband lives, I cannot marry you. Let me know for sure that he is no more. Only then shall I consent to my marriage with you. Till then you must be patient."



Sachidevi sent word to Nahusha accordingly. The upstart ordered some of the sages to carry him in a golden palanquin. The latter, though taken aback by this insulting behaviour, hastened to obey him. As Nahusha was being borne along, he carried — a fierce argument with his uncommon bearers, and once in a fit of temper kicked at Agastya, the great sage. Promptly, the powerful hermit cast a spell on him and Nahusha turned into a lowly serpent. Thus he fell from his high state and lost everything. Indra regained his throne.

Salya ended the tale of Nahusha and said: "Thus perish all those whom power corrupts." Then bidding farewell to Yudhishtira, he went back to Duryodhana.

Now, war preparations were afoot on both sides. To help the Pandavas came Yuyudana, Dhristaketu, Jayathsen the Pandya King, Drupada, King Virata and several more powerful rulers. Many tribal kings with their fierce warriors arrived at Upablavya to fight under the standards of the Pandavas.

On Duryodhana's side had gathered the Titan Bagadatta, son of Narakasura. Buvistravana, Salya, Kritavarma, and Jayadratha.

Neela, King of Mahishmati, the King of Avanti, the King of Kekaya, and several other princes arrived at Hastinapura with their armies to fight against the Pandavas.

Nahusha agreed to wait.

Meanwhile, the gods went in search of Indra and even performed the Horse sacrifice to draw him out of his hiding. When Indra — Nahusha occupying the seat of divine power, he ran off in fright. But his wife pursued him and said, "My lord, why don't you kill Nahusha and regain your throne?"

Indra replied sadly, "I cannot defeat Nahusha in my present state. He is too powerful for me. Only a trick can save me. Unless he incurs the wrath of the sages through some misdeeds of his and loses their protection, I cannot overcome him. Therefore, make him come to your abode in a palanquin carried by the sages. He will then fall foul of the sages."

Duryodhana was hard put to accommodate all his allies, but he did his best to make them comfortable.

The various armies were quartered at different centres. Their flags flew at Panchanada, Gurujangal, Prohidaranya, Ahicchatra, Kalkuta, Ganga kuta, Varuna, and on the banks of the river Yamuna. Drupada's high priest and emissary, wondering ■ this awesome sight, arrived at Hastinapura. He was well received by Vidura, Bhishma and Dhritarashtra. He was invited to speak before the assembly of the Kauravas.

Then the emissary addressed the crowded court: "O Wise men!" he began. "Dhritarashtra and Pandu are kinsmen. They have equal rights to the properties of their ancestors. Now that the properties are being enjoyed solely by the Kauravas, the Pandavas can say that they have been deprived of their rights. What is the reason for this? Everyone knows how Duryodhana had schemed to keep them away from their lawful inheritance. The Pandavas, luckily, survived all attempts on their lives. Thirteen years they spent in hard exile. Yet they have no rancour in their hearts. They desire peace and only claim what is their own. Justice is on their side. Though Duryodhana is strong in armed might, yet ultimate victory will go to the Pandavas. Therefore, let Duryodhana make peace with them. That will be good for all."



Bhishma said, "O Brahmin, what you say is true indeed. I believe the Pandavas are sincere in their desire for peace. As long as Bhima and Arjuna spearhead the Pandava expedition, even the gods will not dare oppose them."

Karna spoke up sharply: "O Brahmin, you have not said anything new. Everyone is aware of what really happened. Yudhishtira gambled with full knowledge of the consequences. He lost the games and went into exile. Now, how can he claim the kingdom? We do not fear the might of the Pandavas! Let them give up their claim to the throne and return to the forest, if they want peace."

Then Bhishma rebuked Karna:



"Karna, words run off your mouth uselessly. Have you forgotten how Arjuna single-handedly routed the Kauravas only recently? We must pause and consider our actions. We should not inflame the passions of the Pandavas any further. Don't be childish in your talk."

Dhritarashtra, too, rebuked Karna for his rash words. Bhishma had spoken for all and was motivated by his desire to restore peace. Then he turned to the priestly emissary and said: "Sir, I shall give the Pandavas my answer through Sanjaya."

The Pandava emissary had to go satisfied with that.

Sometime later Dhritarashtra sent Sanjaya over to the Pandava camp.

The Kaurava emissary was hospitably received by Yudhishtira and the other Pandavas. After replying suitably to their felicitations, Sanjaya addressed the assembled Pandava kinsmen. "Dhritarashtra desires nothing but peace and tranquillity on earth. War means bloodshed and loss of countless lives. It is barbaric for kinsfolk to kill each other. The Pandavas are great warriors, no doubt. But Duryodhana has also gathered a mighty army. The question is, why should we fight? We can establish peace at the conference table. Therefore, work for peace. This is all I have to say."

Yudhishtira replied, "O Sanjaya, what you say is right. We don't want a war. We also wish to settle our differences peacefully. Only a fool will resort to war when differences can be resolved amicably. We must bear in mind the plight of all those who will be affected by the outbreak of war. How can Dhritarashtra who protects the evil Duryodhana be happy? Their fall began when they gambled deceitfully. But if the Kauravas so desire, let there be peace. We shall forgive them for what they did to us. But let them give us Indraprastha. Duryodhana can continue to be the King of Kings. I wouldn't mind."

Sanjaya bowed his head before these reasonable words. He said: "Good, Yudhishtira, you are just. You are far from being avaric-

ious. So, give up the idea of war. But Duryodhana will never part with any area of the territory voluntarily. Still I say you should not engage in war. You are good people. Why should you invite endless trouble by resorting to war?"

Then Yudhishtira smiled and said, "All that is very well. We shall be just. But should we give up our fundamental rights? There is virtue in facing danger, however unwelcome the action may be. We have Lord Krishna with us. We shall abide by his instructions in this matter."

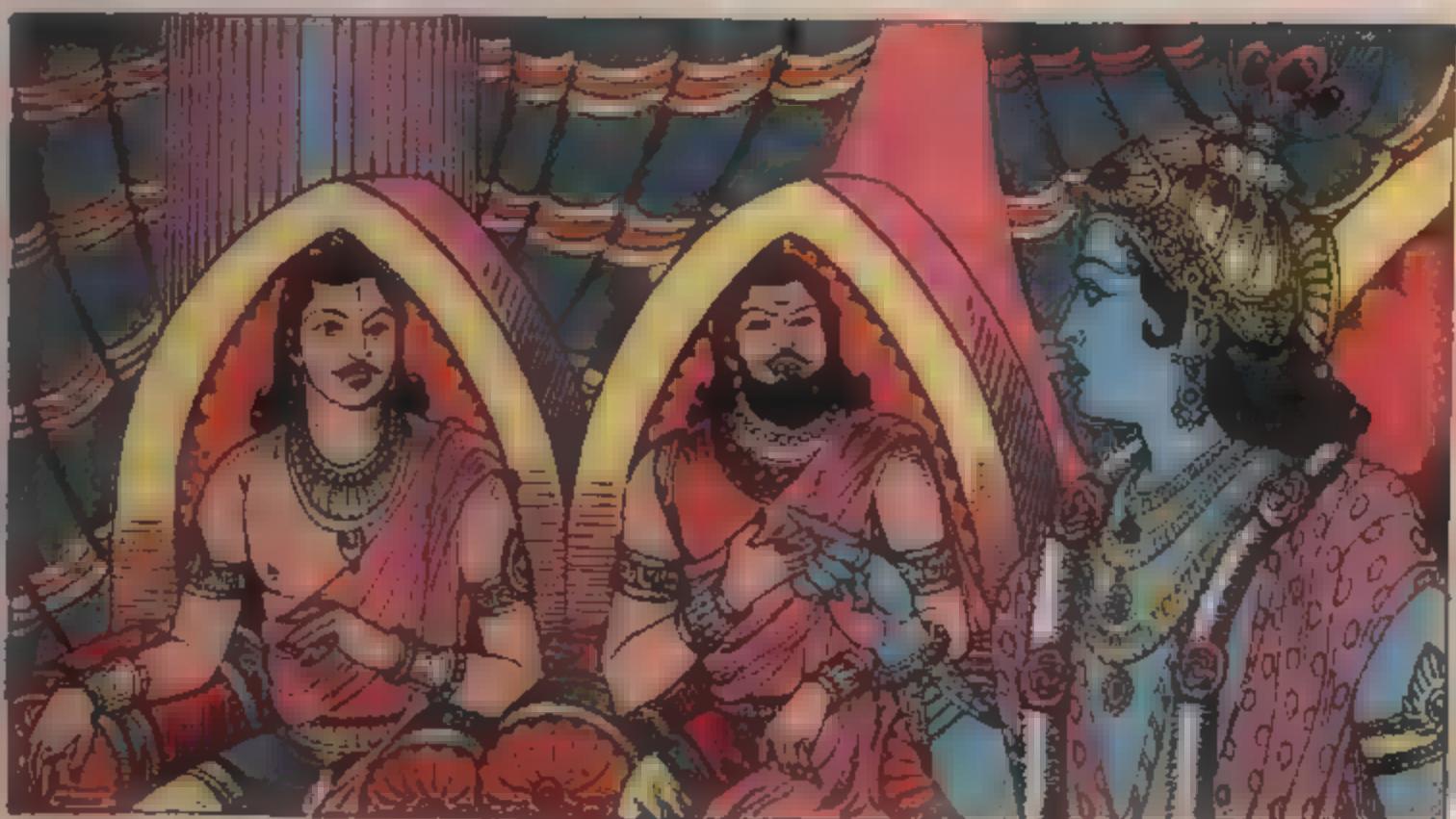
Lord Krishna got up as though on cue and told Sanjaya: "You speak of peace and tranquillity! But have you forgotten that to the Kshatriya war is a virtue? When Duryodhana usurped the Pandava throne, Dhritarashtra spoke not a word in protest. His silence was his seal of approval for an unjust

action. Where was justice then? All these years Duryodhana has enjoyed the privileges that rightfully belonged to the Pandavas. Therefore, it is only proper for him to return the kingdom to the just heirs. If he fails to comply with their request, then he alone will be responsible for the consequences. According to the Kshatriya ideal, war is the solution to a crisis. Go and tell Dhritarashtra so."

Sanjaya listened to these words carefully and then got into his chariot. As he was leaving, Yudhishtira flung these words at him: "O Sanjaya, we don't want the entire kingdom. Let Duryodhana give us at least a portion of the territory."

Sanjaya pondered over these words and then promised to convey them faithfully to Dhritarashtra. He then left for Hastinapura.

— To continue



News Flash

Countdown is on

The 20th century will end on December 31, 2000. The countdown for the last 1,000 days began on April 6 at the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Preparations have already started in cities of the world to usher in the 21st century. The celebrations will start a year earlier on January 1, 2000. Rooms in most of the luxury hotels the world around have already been booked for occupation from the New Year of 2000 A.D. Oakland, a city in New Zealand, will have the privilege of greeting the new century first among world cities.

Tallest

It will be another two years before the proposed iron tower under construction in Taipei, capital of Taiwan, gets into the Guinness Book of Records. When completed, it will rise 550 metres into the sky, which will be nearly ten metres higher than the CN Tower in Toronto, Canada. The Tokyo Tower (333 metres) and the Eiffel Tower, Paris (330 metres/990ft), will look puny by the side of the Taipei Tower, which is estimated to cost nearly 73,000,000 U.S. dollars.

Non-stop chanting

This year's Ram Navami celebrations took place on April 16. Five days earlier, a Mahayagna was started on the banks of the Sarayu river which, the Ramayana tells us, was crossed by Lord Rama on leaving Ayodhya to go into exile for 14 long years. The yagna will conclude on the next Ram Navami, which comes off on April 20, 1998. As many as 21,000 pundits have been engaged to chant the names of Rama and Sita non-stop during this year-long yagna.

French translation

The holy book of the Sikhs, Granth Sahib, has been translated into French for the first time. It runs into 1,676 pages, and has a glossary of 16 pages. Dr. Jarnail Singh, who recently retired from Canadian Government service, took nearly 12 years to complete the work. He thought of this monumental work when he was told that the Guru Granth Sahib has been translated into only English. Incidentally, ■ vast majority of Sikhs who have settled abroad are in Canada which has both English and French ■ official languages. Apart from France and Canada, ther ■ nearly 40 other French-speaking countries. In India, ■ good number of people In Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam speak French even 40 years after the French rulers left these possessions in 1954.

Why do babies cry?

The baby's cry is its means of communication, and every mother knows this. It may be thirsting for its mother's milk; it may be craving for the mother's warmth; it may also be seeking the mother's protection. Simple, isn't it? Yet, scientists in the Speech Recognition and Language Understanding Services Laboratory in the U.S.A., and the University of British Columbia, in Canada, think there is much more in the baby's cries. So, they have been doing research by monitoring babies' cries, recording them on tapes, and analysing them! They feel they can now analyse the distress of the baby and premeditate its needs and provide whatever they require—milk, a blanket, ■ mosquito net, for example—and probably see that they do not cry. But would mothers want to miss hearing the cries of their babies? Let's take comfort by saying that it is just research for the sake of research!



New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

LOVE AND SACRIFICE

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikram did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree and brought the corpse down. However, ■ soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King, normally you should be enjoying ■ good sleep at this hour of the night. Instead of doing that, what makes you go through this strange ritual? I'm rather ashamed of you, O King! You seem to have given a promise to someone and you have made a promise to another to counter the earlier promise. I've a fine example of this in Princess Kamayani. Let me tell you her story. Listen to me, carefully." And the vampire began his narration.

There was once a demi-god called Ratnachooda, who wished to come

down from the heavens and go round the world. One moonlit night, he descended and was floating along the skies when he happened to see Princess Kamayani merry-making in the royal garden along with her friends. He was captivated by her beauty. He felt that even in heavens, he had not come upon a beauty like her. He desired to speak to the girl. He landed on the ground without attracting her attention and then walked to where she stood, surrounded by her companions. "O lovely young woman! May I know who you are?"

Kamayani was taken aback. How come the royal garden permitted a stranger to enter? That too a man! Anyway it would be rude if she did not at least reply him. "I'm the princess of Kanchanapura, Kamayani," she said. She was at the same time curious to know who the intruder was. "But who are you? Don't you know that the royal garden is out of bounds for strangers, that too men? How did you gain entry? And why have you come?"

"I'm a *gandharva* from the heavens," he replied, without taking his eyes off the princess. "I wanted to go round the earth and was travelling in the skies when I saw you and was struck by your beauty. So, I came down, wishing to talk to you."

Kamayani was shocked. "You can't remain here for a moment longer!" She cautioned him. "Please go away.

Otherwise you'll be in danger!"

"Danger to me?" Ratnachooda laughed aloud. "O princess! You've no idea of my powers. Just look around!" In no time, the princess's companions and the garden keepers, who were standing at a distance, all fell down unconscious.

Kamayani was shocked beyond belief. "Ah! Ha!" she said stupefied. Ratnachooda took advantage of her predicament and said: "Princess, I wish to marry you. Would you agree to be my wife?"

The princess stared at the *gandharva*. Her face dropped. "If you wish to marry me, you'll have to undertake a difficult job."

"What sort of job is that?" asked the *gandharva*. "Why do you say it will be difficult for me?"

"Our neighbouring kingdom is Veernagar, and King Mrityunjaya there is desirous of marrying me. But I don't like him at all. Therefore, he's planning to attack Kanchanapura with his strong army. Our army is not strong enough to resist an attack and win the battle. You should try to defeat him. If you do that, I'll be willing to marry you."

"Is that all?" remarked Ratnachooda casually. "I shall go back to the king of *gandharvas*, seek his permission and come back in a trice." He then ascended to the heavens and called on King Chitrachooda, who was aware that his daughter, Lathangi,

was yearning to marry Ratnachooda.

"Don't you know that we people of the Gandharvaloka do not generally marry anybody on the earth?" he rebuked Ratnachooda. "You must respect our tradition. Moreover, my daughter loves you very much. You marry her and both of you can lead a happy life. I shall arrange for your wedding."

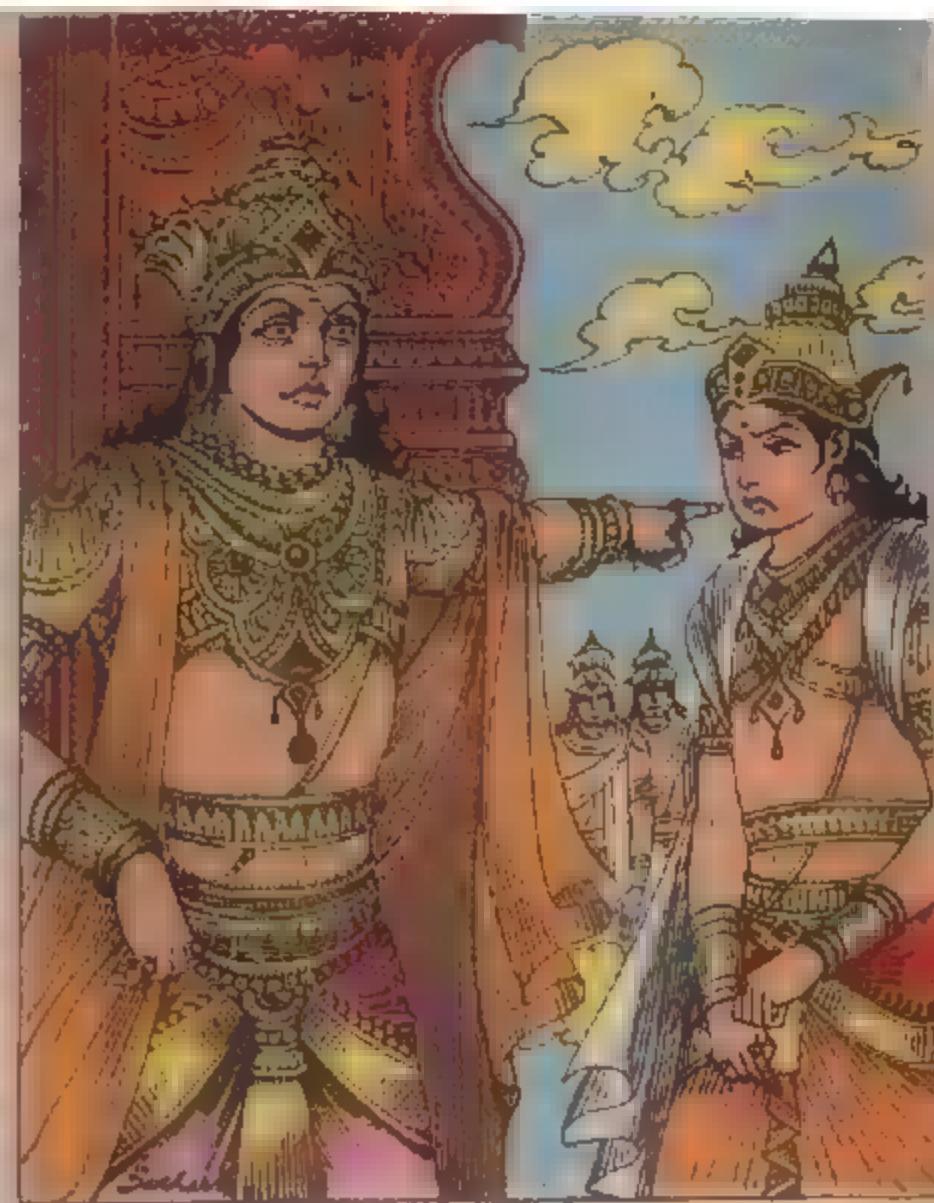
Ratnachooda was angry. "That's impossible!" he protested. "I shall not marry anybody other than Kamayani."

King Chitrachooda, too, was angry now. "If that is the case, then you won't have a place in Gandharvaloka. You may go to the earth and remain there. Not only that, whatever powers you possess as a gandharva would be ineffective the moment you step on the earth. You may take it as a curse!"

Ratnachooda was not willing to accept his king's advice. He did not heed his warning. He once again descended on the earth. Meanwhile Princess Kamayani had informed her father about her meeting with Ratnachooda and his desire to marry her. Ratnachooda waited for the princess in the garden and told her all that had happened between him and his king.

"If you've been shod of your powers, then how do you propose to face the might of King Mrityunjaya?" asked Kamayani.

"My powers might have been taken away," said Ratnachooda, who then



bared his chest and added, "nobody has taken away my physical prowess. I can fight that king single-handed and vanquish him in straight fight."

A few days later, Ratnachooda took over the command of the Kanchanapura army. He led the army to Veernagar and surrounded the fort. King Mrityunjaya came out with his own mighty army and fought the soldiers of Kanchanapura. He saw Ratnachooda in front of him, and threw his spear at him with great force. It headed straight at Ratnachooda and it looked certain to hit and pierce his neck. Suddenly an arrow hit the spear and deflected it from its course. The spear hit only Ratnachooda's shoulder. He turned

round to look at ■ soldier who had cleverly saved him. The face was familiar, but he could not place him at that moment.

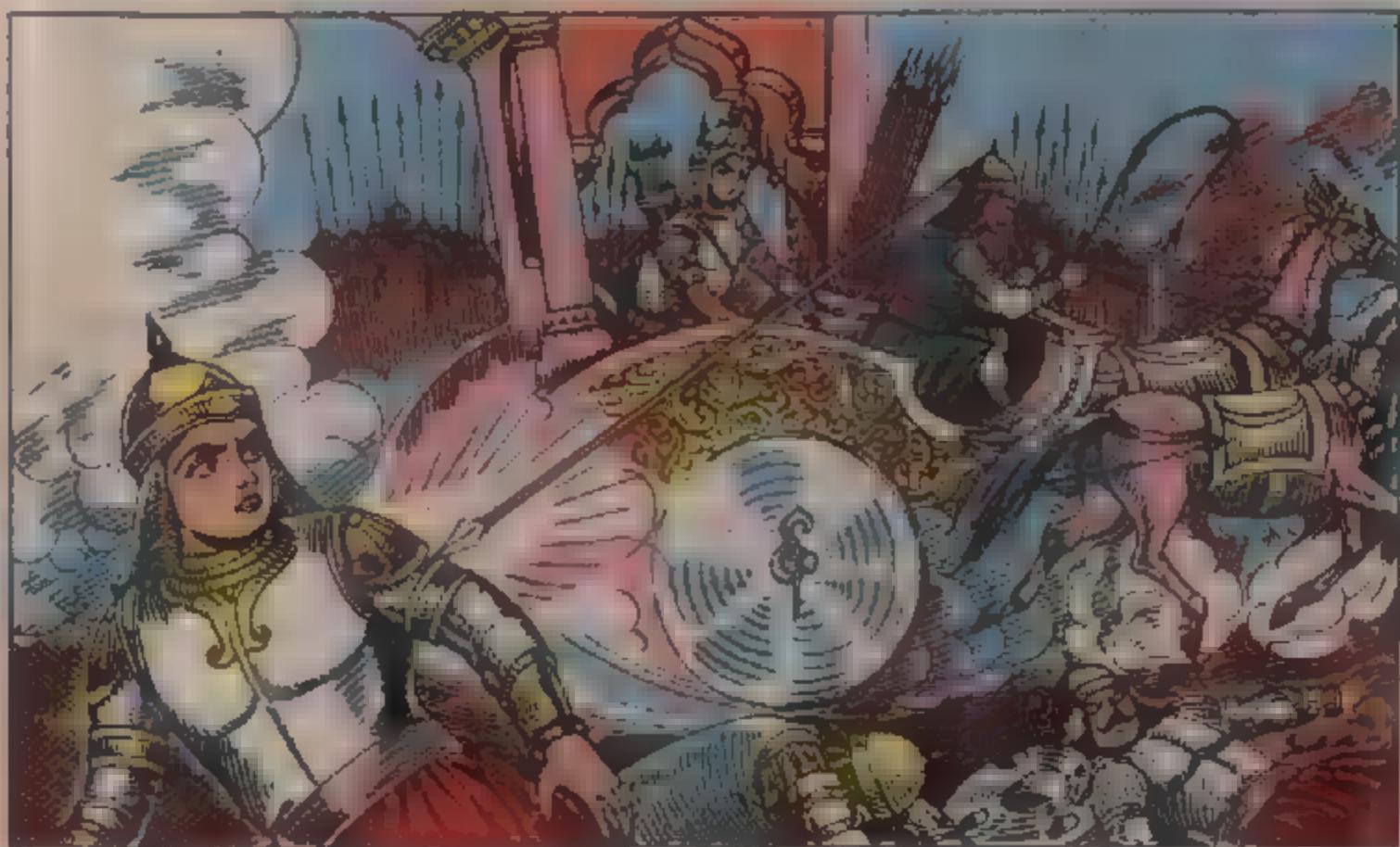
The battle continued. Ratnachooda now fought with greater strength and vigour. He sent showers of arrows all around. It looked ■ though the enemy force would be easily vanquished. Just then an arrow pierced Mrityunjaya and he fell down giving out a loud shriek. On seeing their king dead, the soldiers of Veernagar beat a hasty retreat.

Ratnachooda was victorious. He had kept his promise to Kamayani. Before he went and met her, he wanted to look up the soldier who had saved his life. He searched for him everywhere, but could not find him. He recollects the familiar face. At last

he went into the tent where the soldiers injured in the battle were being attended to. There he saw him. In fact, his headgear had fallen off to reveal more of his face. That was none other Lathangi, daughter of Chitrachooda, King of the Gandharvas. Her intense love for Ratnachooda had prompted her to come down to the earth and join the battle on the side of Ratnachooda.

Lathangi, who was lying unconscious, now opened her eyes and looked at Ratnachooda. Tears welled in his eyes. "Lathangi, you left gandharvaloka and came down here to save me even after I had insisted that I would marry only Kamayani. You've sacrificed your life for my sake!"

"Without you, what's gandharvaloka for me?" said Lathangi. "It



would be nothing but hell! I thought this earthly world would be better, as I could still see you. Moreover, I feared that you would be in danger if you were to face Mrityunjaya in battle, without your special powers. That's why I decided to come to your help. I've achieved my life's ambition. Now I can peacefully die."

Ratnachooda sought out Kamayani, who took him to her father. The King of Kanchanapura praised him for his valour and for saving the kingdom.

"Bravo!" said Kamayani, when they were left alone. "It is as good as our wedding has already taken place. However, after our marriage takes place, you may have to undertake some more difficult jobs!"

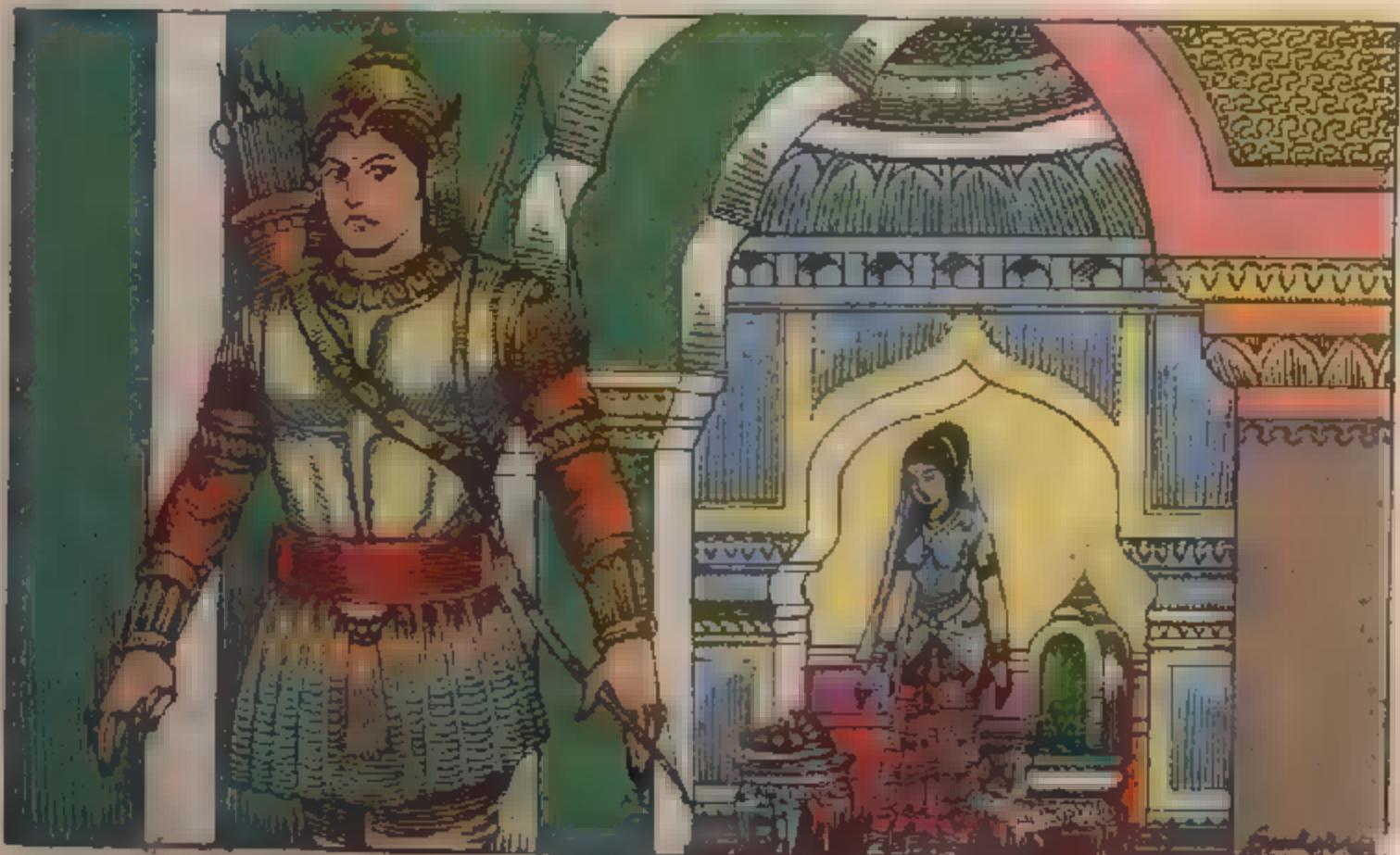
Ratnachooda did not like the way

Kamayani was posing problems for him to solve. "More jobs? What're they?" he asked with a sneer.

"I shall tell you," said the princess. "You'll wage — such wars against other kingdoms and you'll become a king of kings having sway over several kingdoms. Then people will call me a queen of queens!"

Ratnachooda did not allow her to continue in that vein. He shouted at her. "No, I'm not going to fight any more battles for your sake! And I also don't want to marry you!" He just ran away like a tiger that had been released from its cage.

The vampire concluded his narration there, and turned to King Vikramaditya. "O King! Don't you think Ratnachooda's behaviour was strange? He was intent on marrying



Kamayani. And for that, he forsake his comforts in heaven, sacrificed his special powers, and rejected the hand of a gandharva princess so that he could come down to earth. And he fought a battle at the instance of Kamayani. He won the battle for her, and was ready to marry her. But at the last moment, he threw away everything. Was he out of his mind? Well, I need not warn you what'll happen if you don't give me satisfactory answers. Your head will be blown to pieces!"

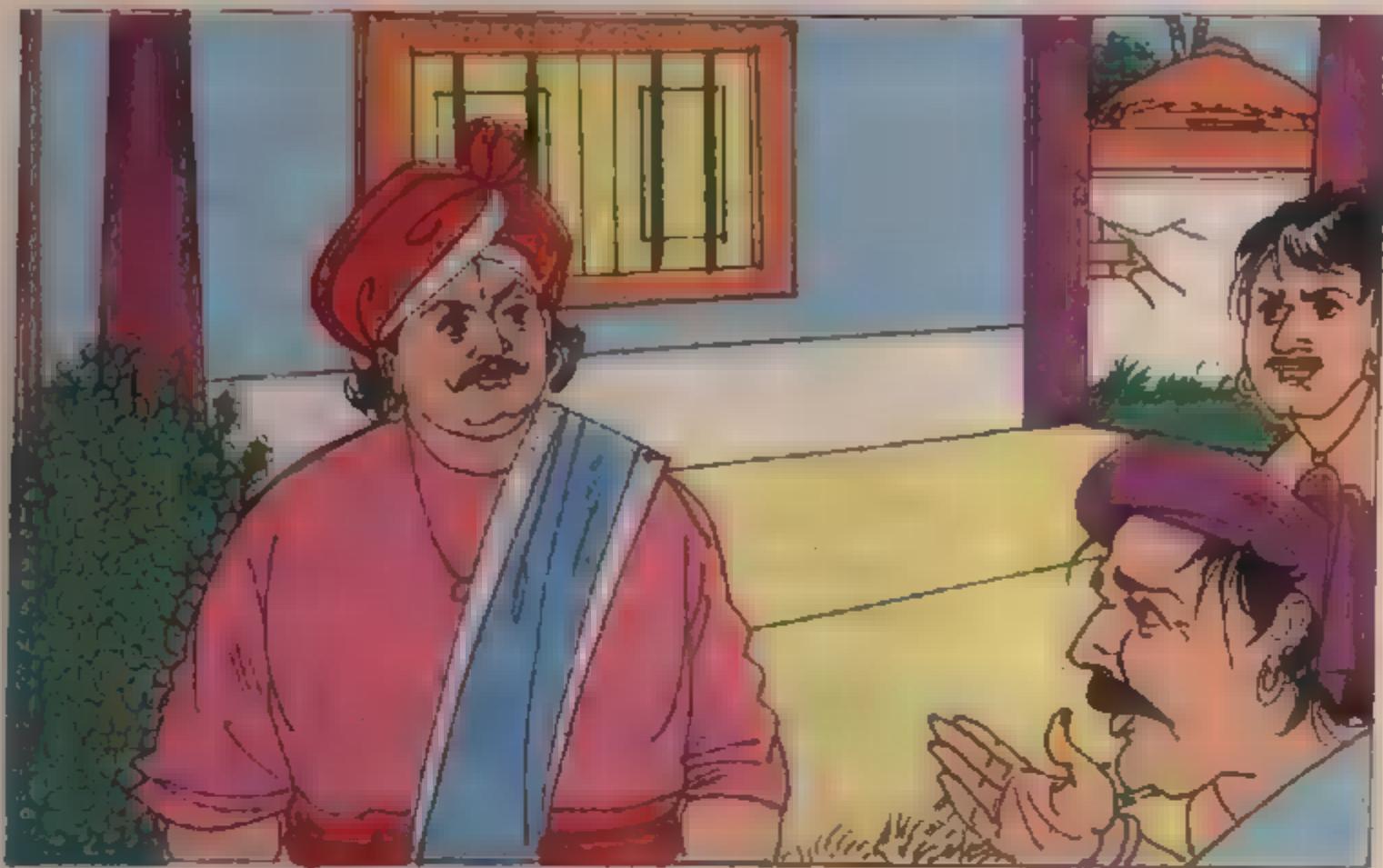
King Vikramaditya broke his silence. "There was nothing strange in the behaviour of Ratnachooda. In fact, he was wise in taking such a decision. He sacrificed a lot of things for the sake of Princess Kamayani. He decided to leave the comfortable life in Gandharvaloka; he was willing to shed his special powers of a gandharva so that he could marry someone on the earth. He forsake the gandharva princess who had yearned for his hand.

And he came down to the earth and fought a battle to please Kamayani. He defeated Mrityunjaya who was threatening to attack her kingdom. But all that was not enough to please her. She wanted him to go and fight other kingdoms and annex them so that she could be a queen of queens. What was the guarantee that she would stop there? She might think of more ventures to satisfy her greed. On the other hand, Lathangi, though disappointed when Ratnachooda insisted on marrying Kamayani, was ready to sacrifice her life for the sake of Ratnachooda, who realised that Kamayani could never be satisfied and he would never be happy with her. He did a wise thing in running away from Kanchanapura."

The vampire realised that he had once again been outsmarted by the king. He flew back to the ancient tree, carrying the corpse with him. And Vikramaditya drew his sword and went after the vampire.



THE TWO OBLIGING NEIGHBOURS



There once lived a landlord. It so happened that he had a carpenter and a blacksmith as his neighbours. All day long and even at night, till the wee hours of the morning, the two of them kept themselves very busy sawing and hammering their wares. In the process, they produced a great deal of noise which disturbed the sensitive landlord. But the two poor men could not help it; they had to earn their daily bread!

Finally, the landlord was unable to stand it any longer. He called his two neighbours and said, "Friends, would

you please arrange to move your houses? If you don't mind, this is ■ order!"

A week passed by, then one fine morning the carpenter called on the landlord and declared, "Sir, I have come with a piece of good news for you!"

"What is it, my good friend?" asked the lordly neighbour curiously.

"As ordered by you, I am moving my house," replied the carpenter and took his leave.

Then after a while the blacksmith paid him a visit. The landlord,

welcoming him, eagerly enquired, "I hope, you too bring me nice tidings!"

"Indeed, my lord, you have very rightly guessed it! A biding by your wish I have also decided to move my house," said the blacksmith bowing courteously.

The landlord, though relieved and happy, pretended to be sorry for having inconvenienced them! "Thanks a lot. But please come and have lunch with me before you move to your new houses," he said, suppressing his satisfaction with some difficulty.

So the landlord treated the carpenter and the blacksmith to a sumptuous meal. Then he bade them farewell.

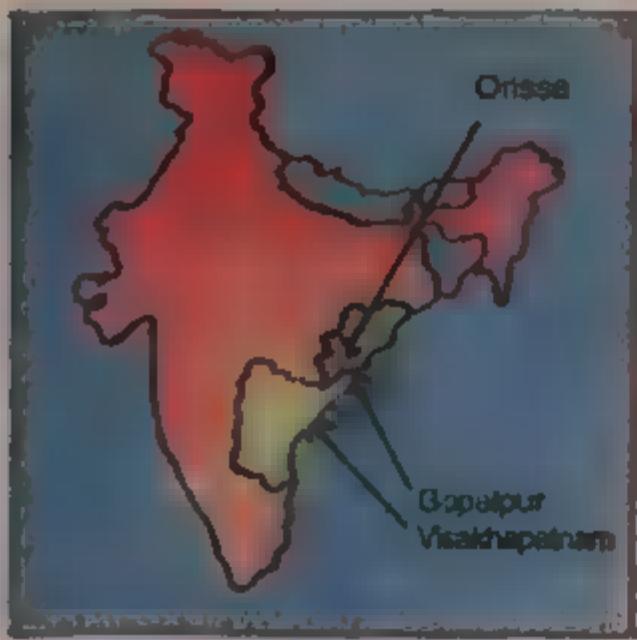
But, strangely indeed, the noise of sawing of wood and hammering of metal continued as before. A surprised and greatly annoyed landlord summoned his clerk. "Go and find out what this cacophony once again is all about!" he ordered.

He soon returned and reported, "My lord, true to their words, both the carpenter and the blacksmith have indeed moved their respective houses. Only the carpenter has moved to the blacksmith's house and the blacksmith to the carpenter's, and both of them as usual are busy with their work!"

The landlord was too stunned to utter a word!

-A. K. D.





Vizag to Gopalpur-on-Sea

♦ Script : ■ ■ ■

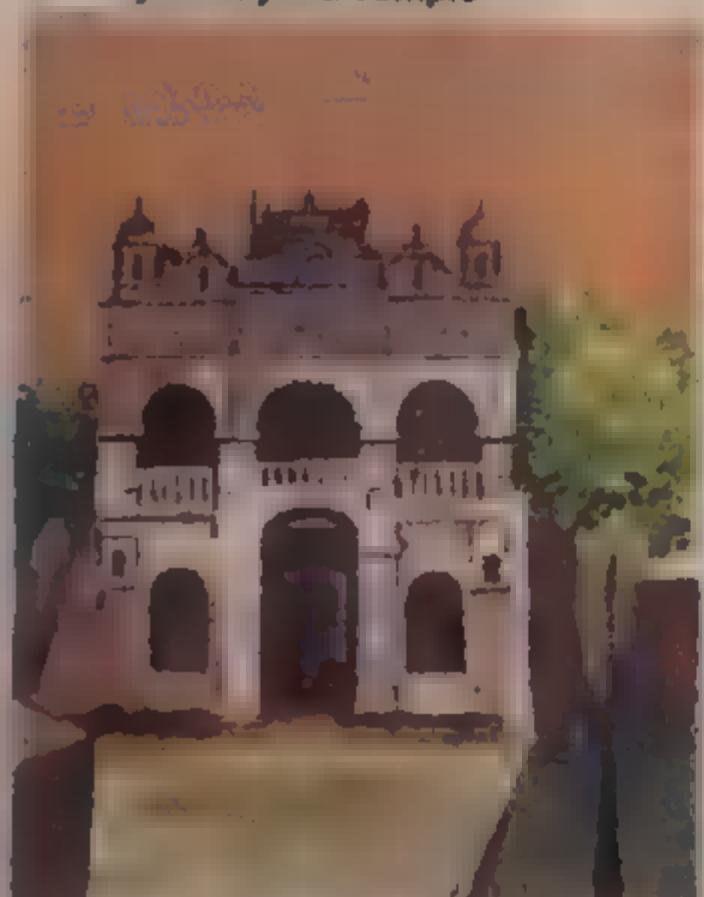
■ Artist : Gopakumar

Our journey north from Visakhapatnam takes us along ■ of the longest beach roads of our country. Twenty-four kilometres up this road ■ the mouth of the river Gosthani is the picturesque town of Bheemunipatnam. It was a Dutch stronghold in the 17th century.

Remnants of a Dutch settlement, ■ ruined fort, some cannons and an old cemetery ■ still to be seen. The beautiful beach, one of the best ■ the eastern coast, and the lush green palm groves have made Bheemunipatnam a tourist resort.

Srikakulam district is the northernmost district on the coast of Andhra Pradesh.

Suryanarayana Temple



A Dutch cemetery



Our next destination is Srikurram ('holy tortoise'), a seaside town, which takes its name from the famous temple of Vishnu located here. It is the country's only temple where Lord Vishnu is worshipped as a tortoise, the second of his ten avatars.

It is believed that if the bones of the dead are thrown into the Swetapushkarani tank at the temple, they get transformed into tortoises or *kurmas*.

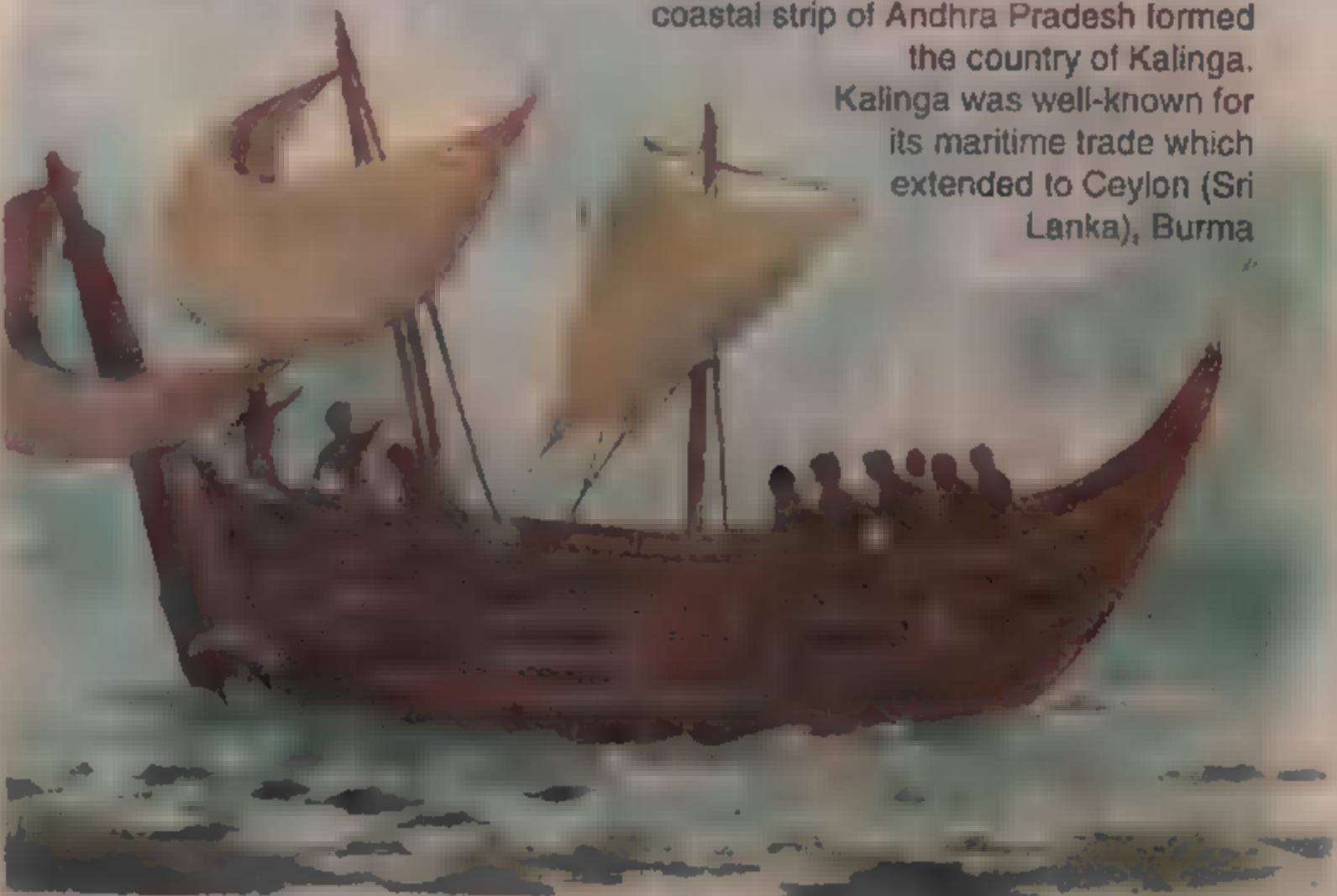
Machkund, a sub-tributary of the Godavari which flows along the northern tip of the Srikakulam district, forms the boundary line between the states of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The Machkund

■ kurma (tortoise)

Thermal Station was commissioned in August 1955. It was the first successful joint venture of the two states.

In ancient times, much of present-day Orissa together with the northern coastal strip of Andhra Pradesh formed

the country of Kalinga. Kalinga was well-known for its maritime trade which extended to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Burma



Maritime trade flourished in Kalinga.

(Myanmar), Indonesia and other countries in eastern Asia. The first Aryan emigration to Ceylon took place from the shores of Kalinga. Trade flourished from ports like Paloura (of Mahabharata fame), Alba and Charitrapura.

Kalinga played an important role in India's history because it was after the Battle of Kalinga that Ashoka, the great Mauryan emperor gave up his policy of expanding his empire by conquest, and turned to Buddhism.

Orissa reached the zenith of her glory between the 4th and 13th centuries under the Kesari and the Ganga rulers. In 1949, two years after India became independent, the 26 tiny principalities of the province of Orissa merged to form the present state of Orissa.

Though Orissa lost its maritime greatness during the British rule, the Oryas keep alive the memories of the maritime prowess of their forefathers by celebrating *Bolta Bandan* or *salutation to the ship* on the full moon night of Kartik Purnima every year. They propitiate the gods in the manner of their seafaring ancestors, and then set afloat small bamboo-boats bearing lighted earthen lamps in the rivers and the sea.

Mihir Sen, the first Indian to swim the English Channel, once organised a sail boat expedition from Paloura to Indonesia to retrace the ancient route from Kalinga to Java. The boat used was a 40-foot, double masted wooden one that resembled the original sail boats of Kalinga.

Celebrating *Bolta Bandan*

Gopalpur is a quiet and enchanting beach town in southern Orissa. The British renamed it Gopalpur-on-Sea. The people here still follow age-old traditions. The women wake up at dawn, sweep the streets opposite their homes and make beautiful patterns in front of their doorsteps with riceflour powder. Just before the sun rises, people gather on the beach and wait with bowed heads and folded hands to greet the first rays of the giver of life and light. Then after offering flowers and chanting a prayer of gratitude to the sun, they take a holy dip in the waters of the sea.

White marker-poles can be seen on the high sand dunes on the beach. These poles help to guide the fishermen out at sea during the daytime. The lighthouse on the beach guides them at night.

The fishermen here wear conical hats that distinguish them from other fishermen in Andhra and Bengal.

Fishermen hauling up a fishing boat to the shore.



THE WONDER BIRD THAT GOT AWAY



Once upon a time there lived an orphan called Yousuf. The boy worked for a rich landlord. He was clever and efficient and his master made him do all sorts of chores from morning till nightfall which the poor lad carried out without a murmur of complaint. Alas, all that he received in return from the miserly landlord was only one lean meal a day and lots of ill-treatment and bullying. It was not surprising that poor Yousuf often went to bed with hunger gnawing at his stomach.

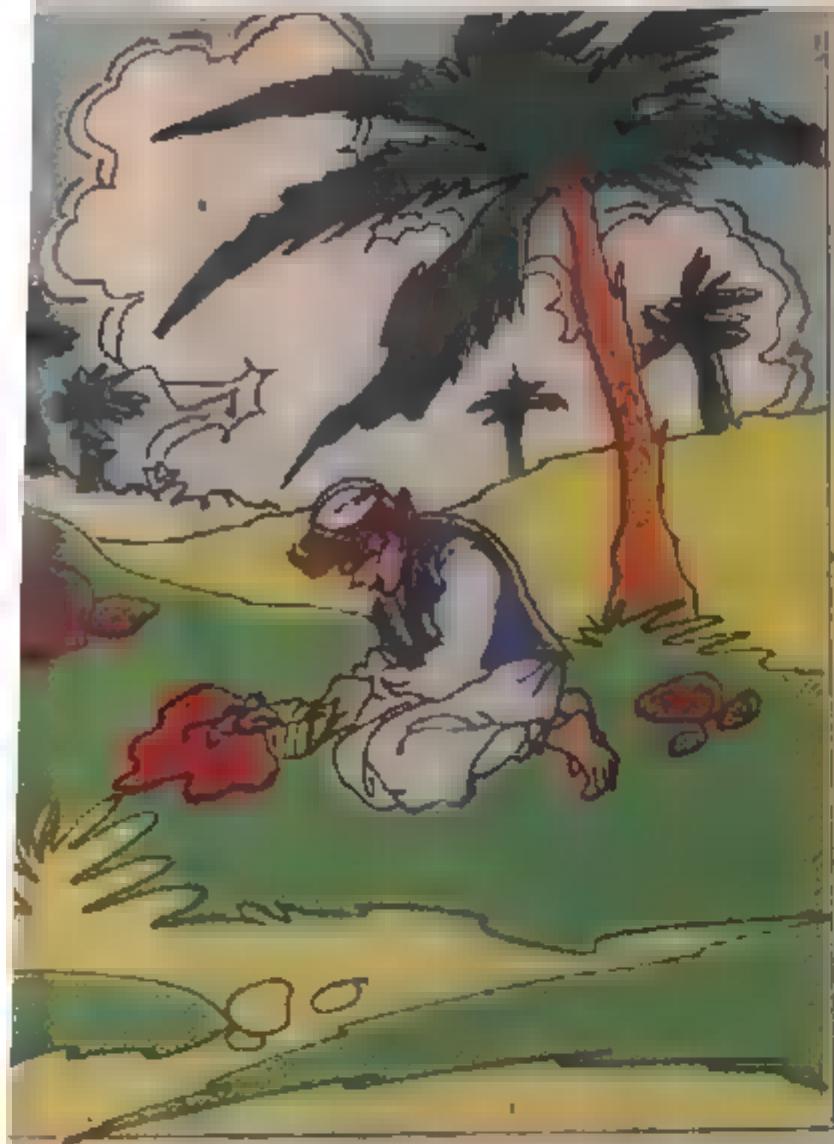
It so happened that once while the

landlord was inspecting his large estate, one of his farmers came to him with a basket on his head and a smile on his face.

"My lord," said the man, lowering his burden, "please accept this present from your humble servant and bless him with happiness and good fortune."

"What is in it?" asked the master, curiously eyeing the covered container.

"Roasted chicken, Sir! Your favourite dish, and most deliciously prepared by my wife. There is also a jugful of juice of the sweetest grapes!" replied the poor man with great



flourish.

Now the gluttonous landlord, with his mouth already watering, beckoned his servant boy and sternly told him, "Look here, Yousuf! Go and safely deliver this to my wife. Am I clear?"

"Yes, Master! Your orders will be carried out in a trice!" replied the boy, obediently.

Suddenly remembering how curious Yousuf often was, who might resort to some naughty mischief on the way, the landlord cautioned him, "Mind you, on no account should you uncover the basket. For under the cloth sits one of the wonder birds of the world! I do not want to lose it! Besides, there is a jugful of poison for pests. Beware! The mere smell of it

might have harmful effects on you too!"

So Yousuf set off with the basket on his head whistling all the way. He had not gone very far when he thought, "Why not take just a look at this wonder bird? I shall do so with my nose closed and mouth shut for a moment, so that there will be no risk of that poisonous smell getting into me!"

So, under a large banyan tree he put the basket down, slowly uncovered it, and looked at its content, carefully sealing his nose and mouth with a handkerchief. He then exclaimed with a chuckle, "My master thinks himself to be clever, indeed!"

It was not before long that a famished Yousuf was relishing the roasted chicken to its last morsel and the grape juice to its very last drop.

The landlord returned home for lunch after making a tiresome survey of his property.

"Wife! Please bring me food, I'm not only weary but hungry too!" he said almost collapsing into a chair.

"You'll have to wait for some more time as the meal is not yet ready!" she replied.

"Then, hurry and bring me the roasted chicken and the jugful of fruit juice! That will do for the moment!" demanded the other.

"What chicken? Wherefrom will a jugful of juice appear suddenly? Are you dreaming?" asked the bewildered lady.

"Why, didn't Yousuf bring them to you in a basket this morning?" tersely questioned the landlord.

"But I haven't even seen the face of the boy since sunrise!" declared his wife.

Surprised and angry, the land-owner marched off in search of his wretched servant. He was in fact very tired then, but his anger seemed to supply him with some hidden energy. He looked for quite some time and at last reached the banyan tree. Under its cool shade lay Yousuf snoring blissfully. He shouted up the boy from his slumber, shaking his fists and growling in rage.

"Tell me, you naughty vagabond, what happened to the farmer's gift, the basket of goods? Did you safely deliver it in my house?" he enquired twisting the boy's ears.

"O kind Master! I had in fact almost reached your house with the basket safely resting on my head. But alas, suddenly a blast of wind blew

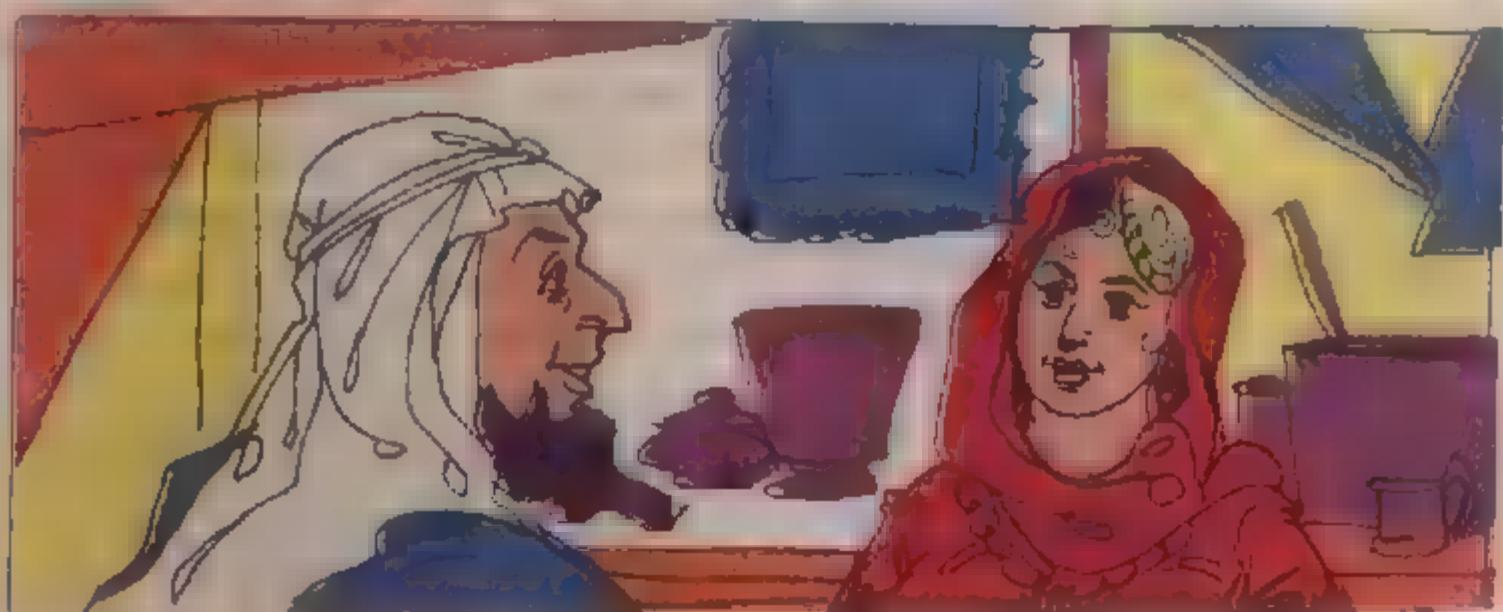
off the linen that covered it and the wonder bird flew away before I could catch it," answered Yousuf, trying to shed a drop or two of tear.

"And, even after that, you had the cheek to fall asleep here and snore blissfully, you wretch!" thundered the landlord.

"Not blissfully, O lord, not at all!" explained the boy in a choked tone. "After the bird flew to its freedom, I was afraid you would punish me, which would be worse than dying! So I drank the jugful of poison. Now here, under the cool shade of the tree, my good Master, I was only lying down, patiently waiting for death to come to me!"

The proud landlord was too dumbfounded to say anything. From that instant his attitude towards the boy changed positively. He treated the boy with due respect and even paid his wages that he truly deserved for his hard work.

— Retold by Anup Kishore Das



THE GORGEOUS SUN TEMPLE

The famous Konark Temple in Orissa was built in the 13th century. It is dedicated to 'Surya', the Sun God. The Konark is one of India's tallest temples (about 200 ft. high). The entrance embodies a flight of steps, decorated with horses sculpted on either side. The whole piece represents a chariot. As the legend goes, the Sun God rides across the heavens on a chariot.



Constructed under the royal patronage of King Narasingh Dev of the Ganga dynasty, it is believed that 1,200 architects laboured for 16 years to build it. It is estimated that about 40 crores of rupees was spent on it.

The delicate and graceful movements of an Odissi dancer remind us of the various statues in Konark which have an overwhelming appeal even today on the mind and aesthetic sense of the spectator.



JANASRUTI AND RAIKVA

Janasruti was a king who did not go to sleep until his officers, who were asked to roam the land, returned to him and informed him that his subjects were happy. If the king were to hear that someone was in trouble, he immediately made arrangements for solving whatever problem the person had.

It was a moonlit night. The king was enjoying a stroll on the terrace of his palace. He saw a covey of silver-white swans flying by, while talking among themselves.

The king knew the language of the birds and so he listened to them.

"I can see a faint strange light emanating from the palace below us!" said one of the swans.

"Well, what you see as light is the aura of King Janasruti. He has this aura, unknown to himself, because he is extremely pious, just, and truthful," replied another swan.

"Janasruti, no doubt, is a great and noble king. But the other night, while flying over the palace of the young King Raikva, I saw this sort of light, but much brighter than this," said a third swan.

After the swans had disappeared amidst the clouds, King Janasruti enjoyed a peaceful sleep, for he was

happy to know that there were souls nobler than he ruling on the earth. In the morning he asked his ministers, courtiers and emissaries and learnt much about the young King Raikva. Then he personally met him, offered him his daughter in marriage, and made a gift of his own kingdom to him.

Thus King Janasruti set an example in humility. Truly great is he who, instead of feeling envious of another's greatness, feel happy about it.



A Spectacular Entertainment

-Shital



An opera is a musical theater show. The performers are singers who also act. An orchestra accompanies the singers. The scenery and costumes are often lavish. The opera originated at the end of the 16th century. Musicians took stories from the Greek and Roman myths. For many years, Opera remained chiefly an entertainment for the very rich. In the mid-18th century, towns and cities throughout Europe began to build public opera houses. Along with ballet, opera is the most spectacular classical music entertainment you can see on the stage.

LOTUS TEMPLE

-Shital

Can you imagine a lotus temple? Sounds impossible, yet it's true. The Lotus temple is the pride of Delhi, India's capital city. Nearly 800 workers toiled tirelessly day and night for six-and-a-half years to construct it. The cost came up to US\$12 million. The Lotus temple is also called the Bahai temple: it has three sets of petals with inner leaves that consist of nine petals. The temple is in dazzling white colour; the cement used for the construction was imported from Korea.





CHANAKAMA

1.the magnificent temples of Tikal?

Built without the aid of the wheel or beasts of burden, these imposing pyramidal structures of stone were the creation of the Mayas, master architects.



15 Where in the World Would You Find...

They were superb astronomers and mathematicians ■ well. Their civilization flourished between A.D. 250 and A.D. 900.



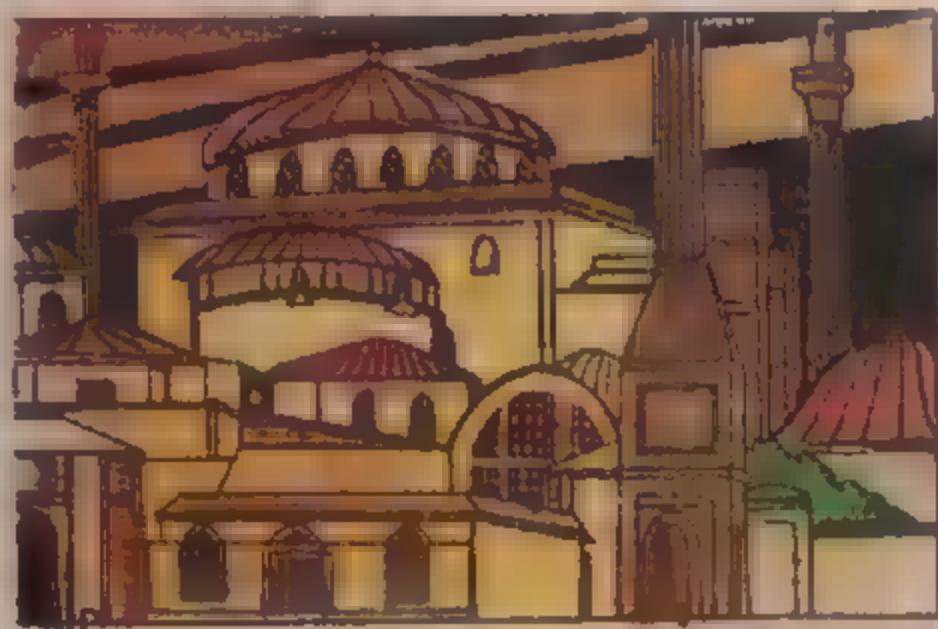
2. ...a village where birds behave in an inexplicable manner during ■ months of September and October?

In an exhibition of the most peculiar behaviour, on some foggy nights, birds of all kinds dive down towards any light on the ground, killing themselves in the process. Some land on the ground, and lie there in a daze, enabling the villagers to trap them easily.

Though scientists have advanced various theories, no definite explanation has been found for the birds' suicidal tendency.

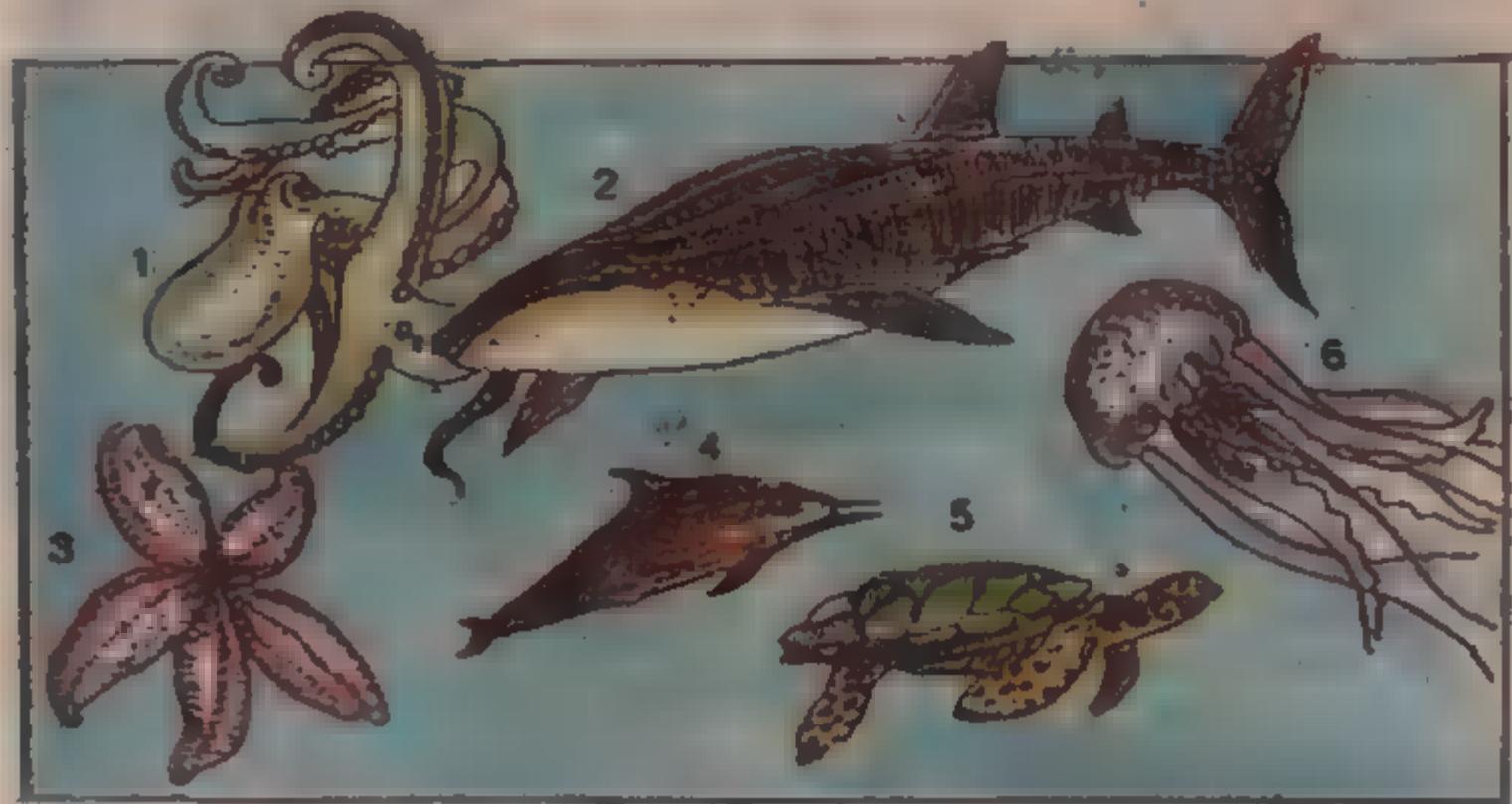
3.a city spread over two continents?

Known in ancient and medieval times as Byzantium and Constantinople, this city straddles the continents of Europe and Asia. It is now the capital of ■ Islamic country in Europe.



PICTURE QUIZ

Identify these sea creatures.



TRIP TRAP

You Be The Detective!

SETH Gokuldas' bungalow has been broken into and goods worth more than Rs. 1,40,000 have ■■■■■ stolen. This is the fifth robbery in the neighbourhood in three months. As in the other cases, in this case too, ■■■■■ thief seems to have gained entry by breaking a window pane. As Inspector Desai is looking at the pieces of glass below the window in the garden, the caretaker comes and stands beside him.

"I didn't hear ■■■■■ thing," he explains. "He must've broken the glass when the Express was passing by, shortly after midnight. The train makes ■■■■■ deafening noise drowning out all other sounds. I understand he entered the other houses too around the same time."

"The man who robbed this house didn't have to worry about waking the inmates," says the Inspector giving the ■■■■■ a stern look. "Now tell me where you've hidden the goods you stole!"

The caretaker breaks down and confesses to the crime. How did the Inspector know the caretaker was the thief?





MIND BENDERS

2. ■ your uncle's sister is not your aunt, what relation is she to you?



3. Banana oil comes from:

- Bananas
- Sugar
- Coal



6. I have ■ clock that shows the correct time only twice a day. It is wrong ■ all other times. What kind of clock is it?



4. How many monkeys ■ you put in an empty cage?

5. Why do birds fly south?



ACTIVITY

Make An Eggshell Paperweight

CLEAN out an empty eggshell. Make ■ paste of plaster of paris and fill the egg with it. Keep the egg upturned while the plaster of pairs dries and hardens.

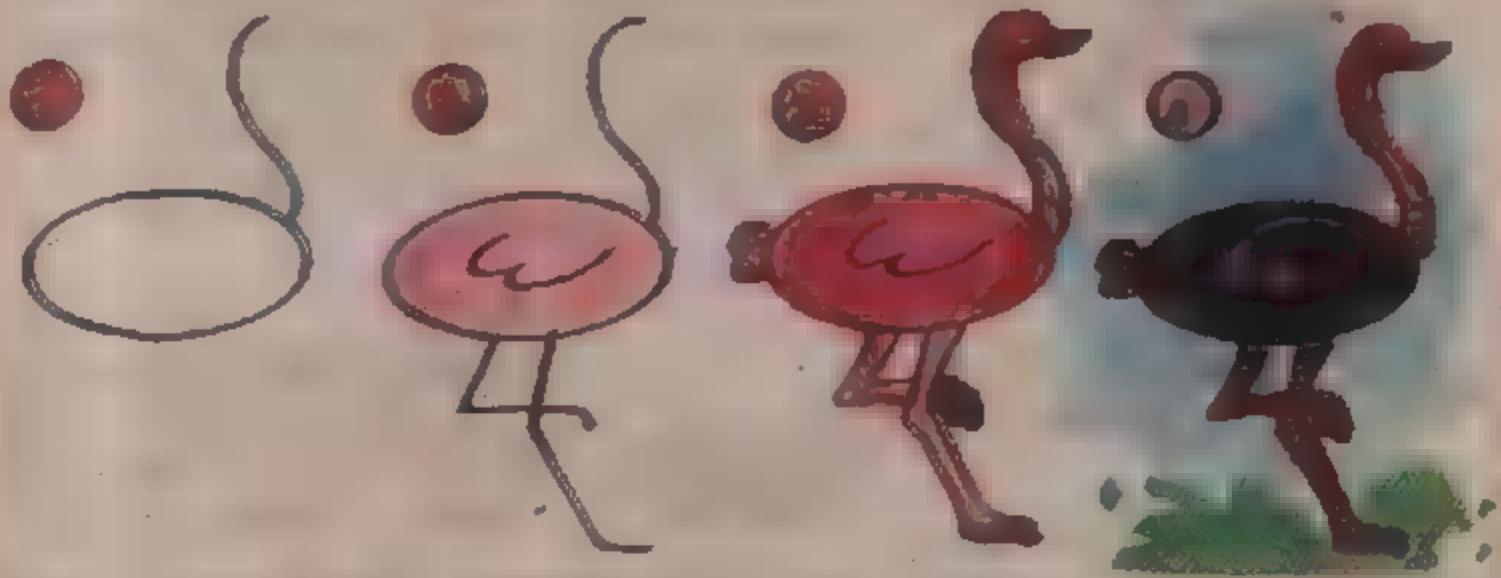
Afterwards, paint the eggshell.

Now your paper weight is ready for use!



Let's draw it

An Ostrich!



Answers to Golden Hour No.14

WHERE IN THE WORLD

1. At Dover in Kent, England
2. At Patna in Bihar.
3. Atop Mamayev Hill, Stalingrad
4. At Cappadocia in eastern Turkey.
5. The Kruger National Park in South Africa.

PICTURE TRAP

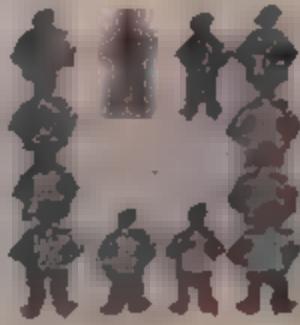
1. The other face is that of an old woman. The girl's cheek forms her nose and the ribbon around the girl's neck becomes the woman's mouth.
2. The spokes of the wheel are standing out clearly. In fast-moving cycle the spokes become just a blur.

STORY TRAP

Guavas did not grow in India at the time of Ashoka the Great. The fruit was introduced into India by Europeans.

MIND BENDERS

1.



2. No

3.

- a) Basilisk
- b) Dragon
- c) Phoenix
- d) Unicorn

4. Obviously Mohan is wearing a cap. If Vinay's cap too was red, Raman would have deduced that his own was black and would have said so.

CONSOLATION PRIZE

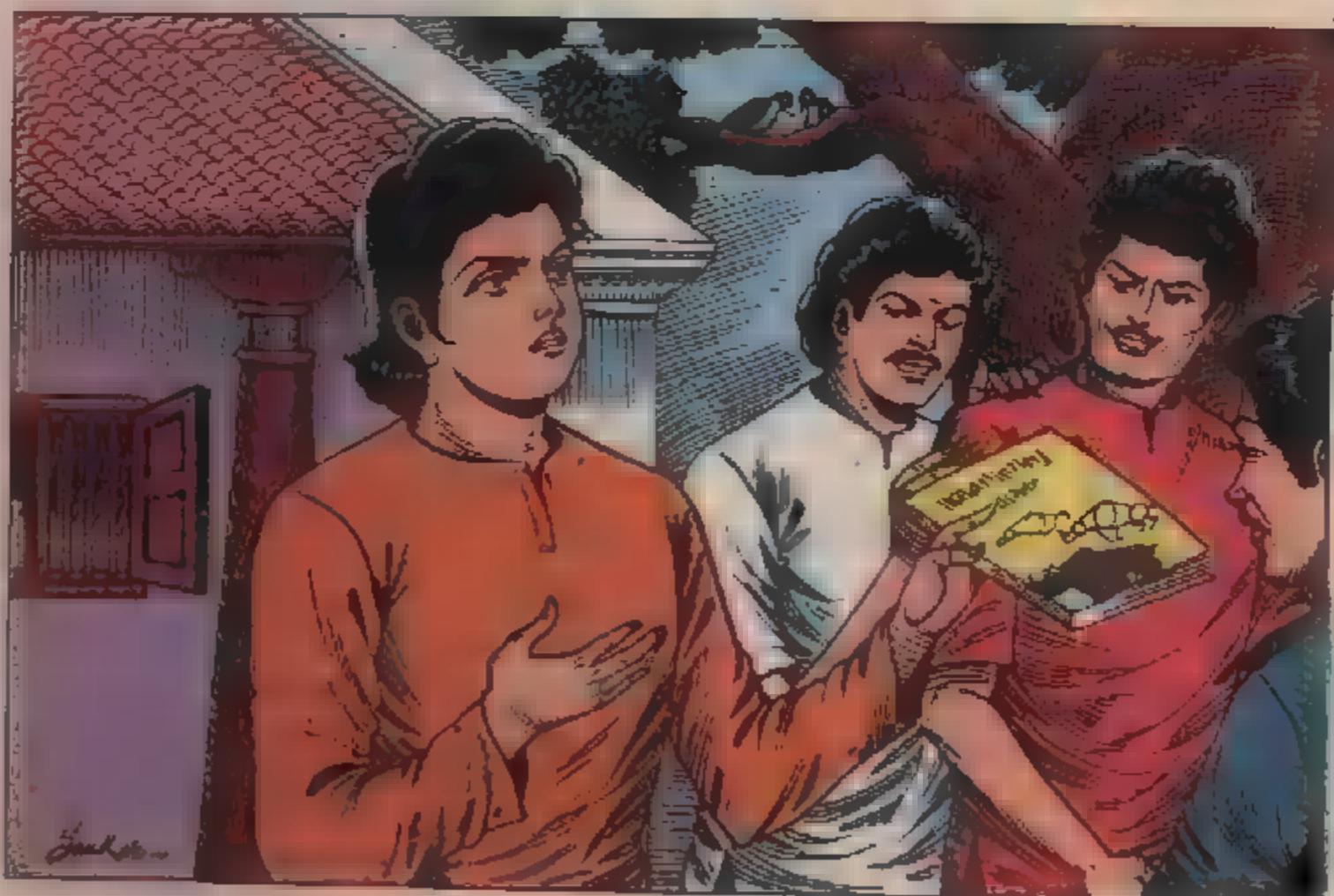
There used to be a painting competition in a certain town every year. Many children would participate in the competition and win prizes, too.

One year, young Kaladharan was among the hundreds of participants. The prizewinning paintings were of high order. The children appeared to have used their imagination. Kaladharan, however, won only an encouragement prize.

Holding the prize he returned home. Some of his friends congratulated him on his success. Some others sympathised with him for having won only a consolation prize. "Why should you be crestfallen? You did win an encouragement prize. Didn't you?" they consoled him.

"You call this encouragement?" Kaladharan retorted. He opened the packet. It was a book. He showed it to his friends. "Read the title!"

They took the book from him. The title read: "HOW TO PAINT AND DRAW"!



TO THE SERVICE OF OTHERS



Once there were three brothers—Sabhapati, Umapati, and Pasupati. After their father's death, they continued to stay in the same house but in separate portions. While their father was of philanthropic disposition, the three sons never thought of helping others. They were selfish enough to think of only their own prosperity and welfare.

One day, a *sanyasi* came to their house and asked for alms. "Would anybody give me something to eat? I'm dying of hunger!" he cried aloud.

The brothers were away at that time. Their wives came out. When the mendicant saw the women, he once again pleaded aloud: "Please give me some food, I'm hungry!"

The eldest Sabhapati's wife remarked: "O Swami! You appear to be

quite new to this locality. If you had known or heard about this house, you wouldn't have asked for alms. Nobody will get anything from this house. The people here don't believe in helping others."

Her sisters-in-law nodded their heads in agreement of what the senior woman had said.

"Amma! I'm not one who begs at any and every house," said the *sanyasi* pitifully. "I seek alms only at places where I feel people will be good and kind. When I saw this house, I liked it very much. If you give me food, you'll be blessed!"

Umapati's wife now stood forward. "Your argument is not acceptable in this place. Nobody would be moved by your entreaties. We've had many people like you come here and make

similar pleas. We won't allow ourselves to be cheated!"

"What to do!" said the sanyasi heaving a heavy sigh. "Nobody wants to hear or believe truth. I came here with a purpose. I wanted to tell you that there's treasure hidden in this house. And by the way I asked for food as I am very hungry."

No sooner did they hear about a hidden treasure than all the three women began inviting the sanyasi separately. "Please come; you must have food at my place," said Meenakshi.

"No, you must have food at my place," said Kamakshi. "I've made a sweet dish and you must taste it."

"I haven't made any sweet dish," said Sivakami, the youngest, "but all my dishes today have been fried in pure ghee freshly made. Please come and taste my food!"

The mendicant agreed to partake of their food and asked them to serve him. All three women brought the several dishes and he ate them with relish. While he ate, he engaged them in conversation and found out all about their husbands. After he finished eating, they anxiously asked him: "When will we get the treasure?"

"Your husbands should do a good deed," replied the sanyasi. "If they do a good deed to help another, each of you will come upon a treasure in your house."

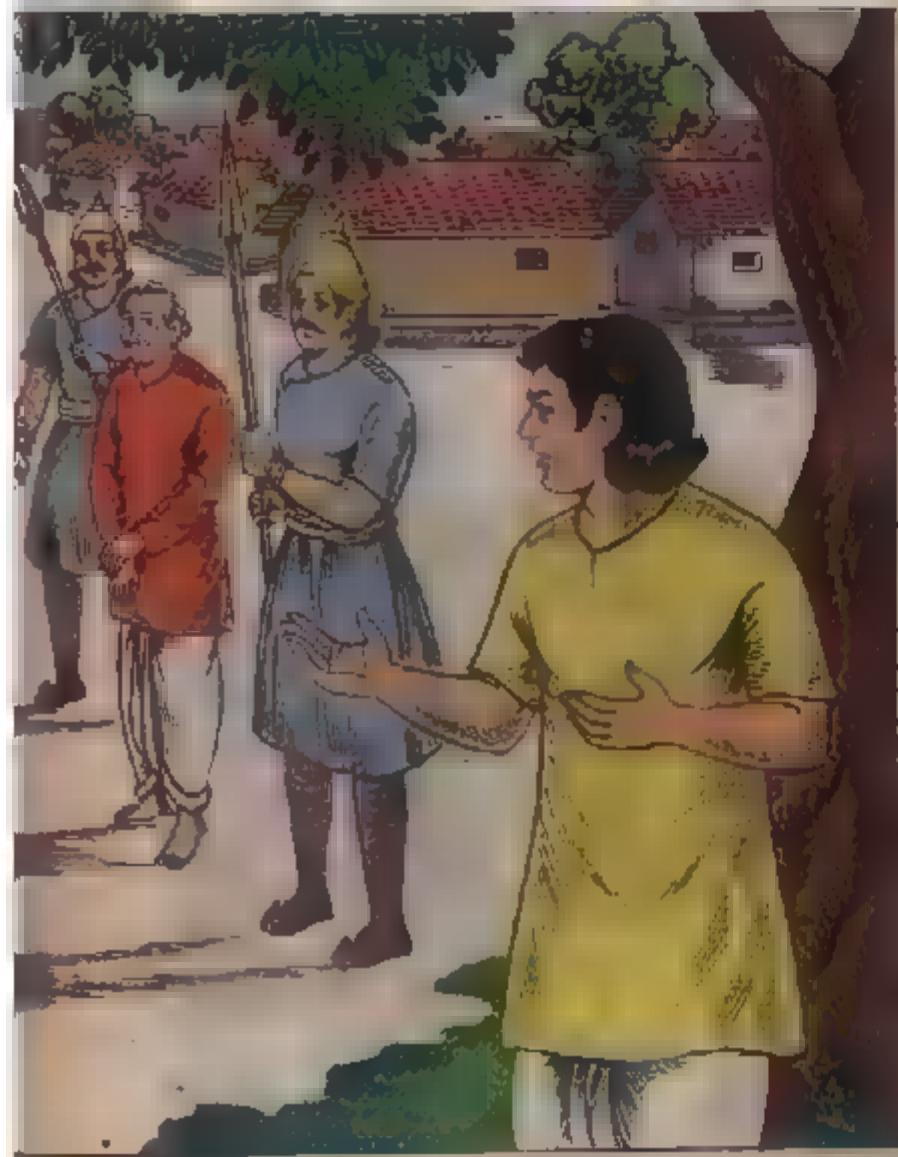
"O swami!" the women said in



unison. "Unfortunately, they are not of that type, doing good to others. We've never seen them do anything like that. In fact, if they — to come to know that we gave you food, we'll be in for trouble!"

The women looked worried.

The sanyasi was upset — hearing their complaint. "Is that so? Don't worry, I shall think of a way out," he said. "I shall give you a tablet each. You should mix it with the water they drink. If they drink that water, their attitude will change, and they'll want to do a good turn. And soon after they perform such a good deed, then within the next evening, you'll come upon a treasure. I shall be around this place for the next four or five days. The



moment you get the treasure, you must inform me." He then gave a tablet to each of the women.

When the husbands returned and sat for dinner that night, they mixed the tablet in the tumbler of water they kept for the brothers. All three of them drank the water.

Sabhapati woke up rather early the next morning. He opened the door and looked outside, only to see his friend Manmohan being led by two policemen. He was in tears. "Why are you taking this poor man in chains?" he asked the policemen.

"He's a cheat!" they told him. "He took loans from several people and with that money bought properties in the names of his wife and children.

And now he's refusing to return the loans. So, his creditors have filed a complaint and we've orders to arrest him."

"But if you put him in prison, how will he return the loans?" argued Sabhapati.

"That's none of our concern," said the policemen. "If he were to pay a thousand rupees, he can come out on bail and later he can work and earn enough money to repay the loans. But he says he doesn't have even a hundred rupees. So, we've no option except to take him to jail."

"What a pity! He has to be in jail because he doesn't have any money to seek bail," said Sabhapati. "All right, I shall pay the bail amount on his behalf." He went inside and brought a thousand rupees and handed the money to the policemen, who then released Manmohan.

Sabhapati accompanied Manmohan to his residence and held a meeting with his creditors and discussed how the loan amounts could be repaid. His wife and children felt ashamed that Manmohan would have been imprisoned if Sabhapati had not gone to his rescue. They promised to return the loans and prepared the documents in the presence of Sabhapati. The creditors went away happy and satisfied, after promising to withdraw the case they had filed.

Manmohan's wife was full of apologies. "I remember, once my

husband and you were arch rivals. I know he was responsible for that and you were not on talking terms with each other. Still you couldn't brook the sight of his being taken away in chains, and you went to his help. We're all indeed greatly indebted to you, sir. I hope this experience would bring about a change in his attitude. And you've pacified all his creditors, and we can now live in peace. We shall ever be grateful to you."

Manmohan requested Sabhapati to forgive him for his behaviour till then. He told Sabhapati that he would cooperate with him in future. They embraced each other and Sabhapati went back home.

Meanwhile, Umapati had had a change of heart when he got up. He was told that one of their neighbours was digging a well and had struck a rocky bottom. None of the workers had been able to break the rock and the neighbour was at his wit's end.

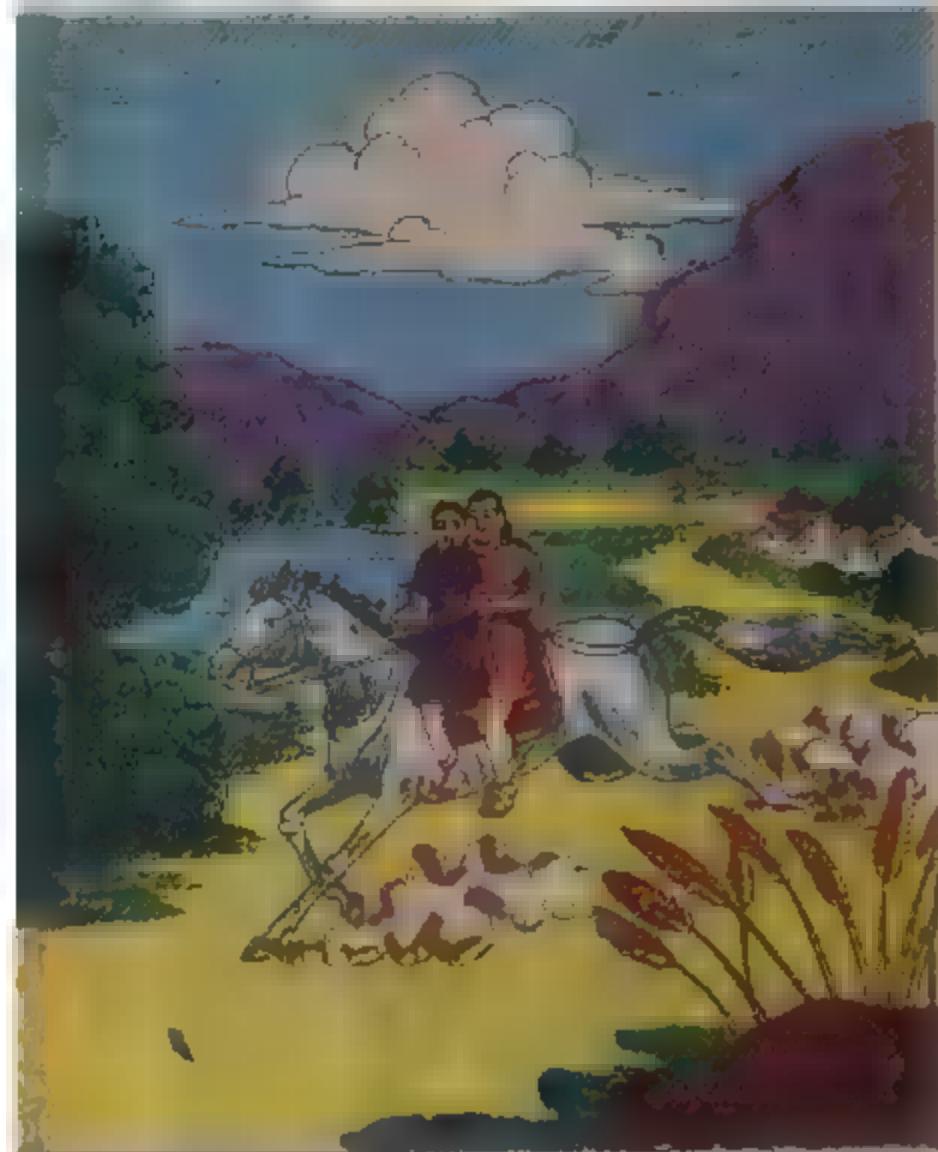
Umapati was the strongest of the three brothers, and so he unhesitatingly went to their neighbour's help. Infact, he had some urgent work elsewhere and he was at that time getting ready to go out when word went to him about the neighbour's predicament.

Umapati took the hammer from the workers and began to hit hard on the rock. In no time the rock broke into two. He then helped the workers to break the rock into smaller pieces.



When they were cleared, they could see water trickling from all around. Umapati climbed out of the well, washed his hands, and went his way to attend to his own work.

Pasupati, too, got an opportunity to be of some help to another. As he was going out to consult a doctor for his stomach pain, he saw someone lying on the ground, writhing in pain. Mohan was a poor labourer and he had been bitten by a snake. Pasupati carried him on his shoulders and took him to a physician. He gave him some first aid and told Pasupati to rush to the town to a specialist who could give him an antidote for the poison as he himself did not have it. "But you must reach him in less than four hours.



If you were to walk, it'll take one full day and he may not survive the delay or the strain of walking."

Pasupati went to the village chief who owned a horse. He told him about Mohan and the need to rush him to the town. He borrowed the horse, went back to the physician's house and put Mohan on the horse-back and rode towards the town in lightning speed.

Once they reached the town, he sought out the doctor, who gave some medicines to Mohan and made him lie down for an hour to sleep off the strain. When he woke up, Mohan felt all right. The doctor was all praise for Pasupati, because he had brought the man in time to get cured. He had thus

saved a precious life. Not only that, Pasupati had taken the risk of riding the horse despite the fact that he himself was suffering from stomach pain which would have thrown him off the horse if the pain had aggravated. The doctor gave him some medicines for his stomach ailment and sent them away without taking any money for the medicines.

When Meenakshi, Kamakshi, and Sivakami came to know that their husbands had gone out of their way in doing good to others, they were very happy. Now they should search for the treasure promised by the sanyasi. They began to dig the compound. Each one got a copper vessel of the same size but they contained different coins. Sivakami had gold coins in her pot; Kamakshi had silver coins, while Meenakshi got only bronze coins. Their husbands had done service to others, but the rewards were different. They went in search of the sanyasi and described the kind of help their husbands had rendered.

The sanyasi smiled. "It's true, you gave your husbands the tablets I had given you mixed with water and they drank it and experienced a change of heart. As a result they were willing to go to the help of others. One of them saved the life of another and wished that he got more such opportunities. He got gold coins. Another brother thought he would go to the help of someone only if his help is sought. He



was rewarded with silver coins; whereas the third brother willingly spared his money but hoped that he would not be called upon to part with more money. He got only bronze coins. It's not the act of service that was rewarded, but the mental attitude."

The three women went home and handed the coins to their husbands. When they were told how their wives had come upon the pots of treasure,

Sabhapati said: "The coins will belong to all of us. For us, there will be no difference between gold coins and bronze coins. There will not be any discrimination between the brothers and their wives, and we will always be of service and help to others."

From that day onwards, they lived like members of one family.

- Please all and you please ■■■■
- Time is man's angel
- No path of flowers leads to glory
- The seal of truth is simplicity
- He who suffers Conquers
- First weigh, then attempt
- What is now reason was earlier impulse

SPORTS SNIPPETS

Highest Individual Score

The distinction of making the highest individual score in one day cricket has gone to Saeed Anwar, Pakistan's vice-captain and opener. He created the record in Chennai (Madras) on May 21 during the Pakistan-India encounter in the Pepsi Independence Cup cricket. He scored 194 runs, which included 5 sixes and 22 fours, in 206 minutes. He beat the record (189 not out) standing in the name of Vivian Richards, of W. Indies, made in 1984 against

England at Old Trafford, Manchester. Anwar told reporters later that Richards had been a tremendous inspiration to him.

Anwar has so far made 12 centuries in one day matches. He has till now scored nearly 4,400 runs in 120 first class matches. Playing in Sharjah a few years ago, he scored three consecutive centuries. Ever since then, his friends have been calling him "Desert Fox" affectionately. An officer with the Agriculture Department, 29-year-old Anwar is a Computer Science Degree-holder. Incidentally, India's Kapil Dev's 175 not out against Zimbabwe in 1983 is among the individual scores "on the high side", along with 188 (not out) by Garry Caston of South Africa against U.A.E. in 1996, and 181 by Vivian Richards against Sri Lanka in 1987.



Fastest wicket-taker

This record, too, goes to another Pakistan player, Saqlain Mushlaq, who got his 100th wicket in one-day matches, achieving the distinc-

tion in his 53rd one-dayer played at Gwalior, India. His hundredth victim was Roshan Mahanama of Sri Lanka and he erased the mark held by Pakistan's Waqar Younus who got his 100th wicket in his 59th one-dayer. Saqlain is the eighth Pakistani and 37th player in the world to take 100 wickets in one-day matches. Australia's Dennis Lillee and Shane Warne had achieved this distinction in 60 matches.

Machine humbles man

Heard of Frankenstein? It was a monster created by a man who causes the ruin of his creator. All machines are invented or made by man—like the IBM computer called Deep Blue. It played chess with world's Number One, Garry Kasparov and beat him in six games played in New York early in May. The 6 ft. 5 inches tall 1.4 ton computer thus earned a place in chess history as well as computing history—mainly because of its calculating power. When Kasparov won the first game on May 4, chess buffs hoped that man would establish his superiority over machine once again. The second game went to Deep Blue. At the end of the fifth game, they stood tied with 2.5 points each, with three games declared as drawn. The



final game played on May 12 was won by the computer. There was no previous occasion when Kasparov had given up a match in less than 20 moves and in less than one hour. He stormed out of the hall, tearing his hair, and vowing "to take revenge" on the computer. He is now

expected to propose a 10-game match. Meanwhile, world's woman chess champion Susan Polgar submitted a "female challenge" to Deep Blue within a few minutes of Kasparov's defeat. If the challenge is taken, then it will be a ■ of 'machine versus woman'.

Records for your scrap book

- China's Yu Wenyu, in the women's 70 kg. category, lifted 103 kg. at the East Asian Games held in Pusan, South Korea, on May 15. (Earlier record: 102.5 kg by Tang Weifang, also of China-1996)
- Jiang Yinsu of China (46kg) hoisted 81.5 kg. at Pusan on May 11 (beating earlier record of 81 kg. by Guan Hong, of China-1995).
- Wang Guvohua, of China, in the men's 64 kg. category, lifted 150 kg. in Pusan, beating his own record of 148.5 kg.
- Fifteen-year-old Mirjana Lucic ■ Croatia, the world Number One junior tennis player, beat Corina Morariu of the U.S.A. in the Croatian Bol Open, on May 4, to become the youngest winner of ■ WTA tournament, since Jennifer Capriati (U.S.A.) in Puerto Rico in 1990. Lucic is also the only player in the history of professional tennis ■ win ■ WTA tournament in the first attempt.
- Jennifer Thompson (U.S.A.) set ■ world record (57.79 seconds) in 100 m butterfly at the world short-course swimming championships at Gothenburg on April 19. (Earlier record: 58.24 seconds by Ayari Aoyama, of Japan, March 1997).
- The Australian four-member team clocked 7 min. 02.74 seconds in the 2 X 200 m freestyle relay beating the earlier record of 7 min. 05.17 seconds ■ by a team from then West Germany in 1986.



- Claudia Poll of Costa Rica clocked ■ min. 0.03 seconds in 400 m freestyle at Gothenburg on April 19, beating the 10-year record of ■ min. 2.05 seconds made by Germany's Astrid Strauss in Bonn ■ 1987.
- The richest (4,000,000 dollars) horse race—the Dubai World Cup—held on April ■ ■ won by 5-year-old Singspiel ridden by Jerry Bailey. The horse is owned by Dubai's Crown Prince and Defence Minister, Prince Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid.

GREED IS NOT ADVISABLE



Hema was born and brought up in a town. She was thus used to a life in the town. Hari had a job in the town. They happened to meet and fall in love with each other. They got married. Hema continued to live in the town.

Unfortunately, within a few days of their marriage, Hari lost his father, and he was forced to shift to the village so that he could look after his widowed mother, and sister who had to be given in marriage, and also manage their farms. Hari resigned his job in the town, packed up, and moved over to the village with Hema.

A life in the village was jarring for Hema, who was used to the razzle-dazzle of town life. She found it difficult to adjust herself to a quiet life in the village. Moreover, a life in

the company of her mother-in-law and sister-in-law was irksome to her. She did not like either of them. She yearned for an independent life without the presence of the two women.

However, she did not utter a word of unhappiness or dissent for a fortnight. She remained silent, attending to the chores, without Hari's mother or sister lending a helping hand. She could not tolerate such a hard life any more. On the fifteenth day she protested to Hari. "Look here, I don't like this place at all. I want to get back to the town. I shall ask my father to find a suitable job for you there. I'm fed up with my life here."

Hari had to listen to his wife. True, there were some inconveniences and discomforts. But he did not want to

express an opinion against his wife's wishes, and make her sad. So, he escorted her back to the town, left her with her parents, and returned to the village.

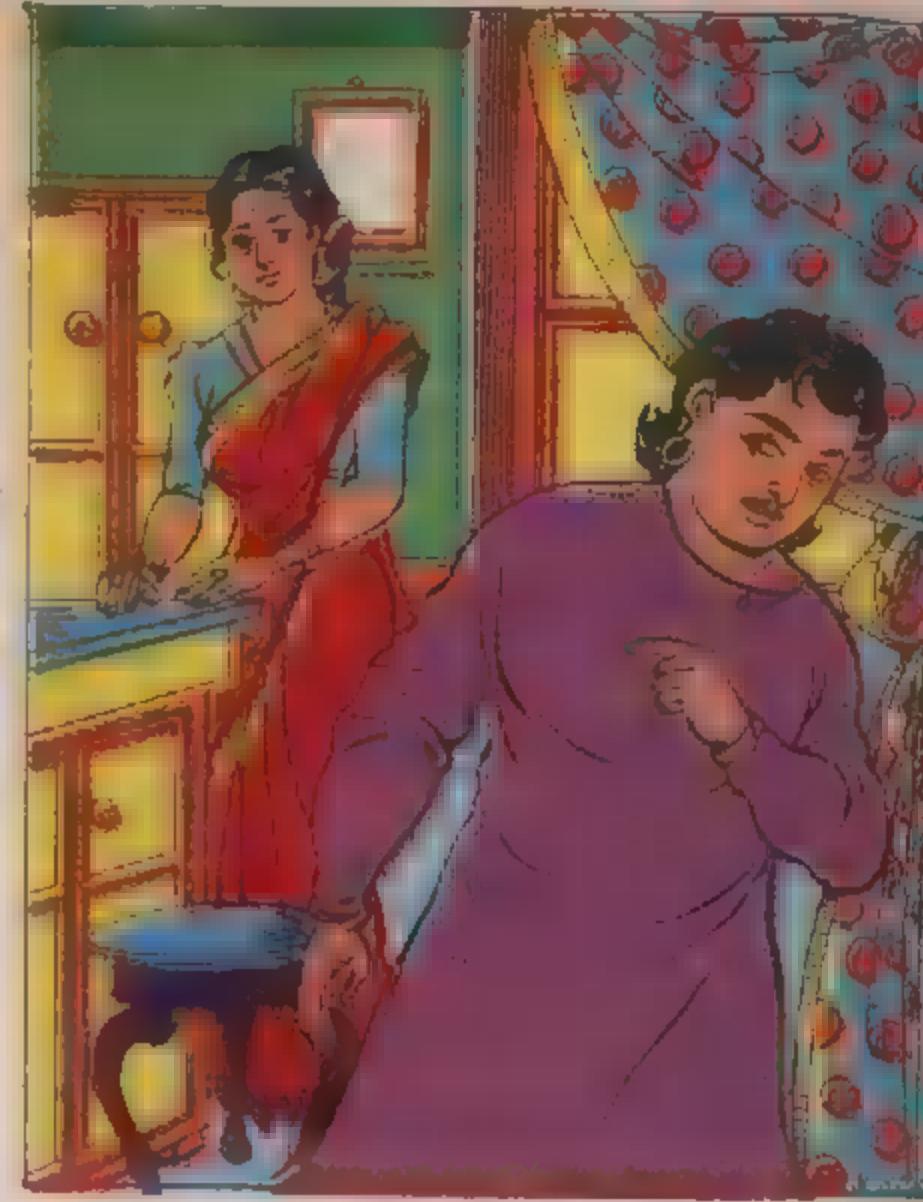
"I can't live in that god-forsaken place," she told her father. "What a suffocating life! And I've to sacrifice my comforts for the sake of his mother and sister. Father, please find a good job for Hari. Let us also live somewhere here."

Hema's father tried his best and secured a job for Hari. Only, it was in another town. However, Hema was happy. She rushed back to the village. "Come on!" she told Hari. "A job is ready. You must take it up soon. There's no time to lose. Let's go away today itself!"

"Don't be in hurry, Hema!" Hari pleaded with her. "How can I leave everything just like that and get away? Who'll look after the farms? Who'll take care of my mother and sister? They have to be taken with us. Give me some time!"

"Nothing doing!" Hema remonstrated. "None of them will go with us. Let them stay back and manage the farms. And we'll stay in the town."

Hari's face dropped. He could not accept Hema's suggestions. His mother saw his predicament. "Don't worry, my son!" she put him at ease. "You both go and stay in the town. And don't bother about us. We shall stay back and look after the farms.



Now that you'll join a good job, you both won't have any difficulties. We shall come over whenever there is a festival, and stay with you for a couple of days and come back."

Hema was the happiest person in the world at that moment. Hari reluctantly accompanied her to the town and started living there. Hema did not lose any time; she went and bought a couple of silk saris and two necklaces.

It was once again a festival season. Hema received a letter from Hari's sister. It said that she and her mother proposed to spend a few days with them in the town. When Hari came in the evening, he too read the letter and was happy. The next day Hema lay

down with a touch of fever. It looked as though she had malaria. Hari knew that she would not be able to look after his mother and sister well. So, he wrote to his sister. They should postpone their visit. When it was certain that they were not coming, Hema's fever subsided completely!

Days passed. Another festival season was approaching. This time Hari thought he would himself write to his mother asking them to come over. He also decided he would present them with a silk sari each.

Hema had a different proposal. With the money he had kept for the silk saris, he should buy a necklace for her and only cotton saris for them. Poor Hari! He had to agree to her wish. The next day they went to the jewellery shop. As the festival season had already started, the shop was very crowded. Hema hurriedly chose a necklace. The salesman weighed it. It was of five sovereign weight. "This will cost you five thousand rupees," he told her.

"I shall take it," said Hema. The salesman passed on the necklace to the cashier. "Five sovereigns, five thousand rupees!" he shouted.

Hema and Hari moved to the cash counter. The cashier gave them the bill. It said: three sovereigns and three thousand rupees. Hari was about to point out the discrepancy to the cashier, when Hema whispered to him: "Let's keep quiet! You pay the money,

and let's go away quick!" When they came out, Hema boasted: "The cashier made a mistake and I was clever enough to take advantage. See have I saved two thousand rupees. Come on, let's buy a sari for me. After all, I deserve a gift!"

As soon as they returned home, Hema took out the necklace and tried to put it on when it was caught in her hair and broke into two. She went to the nearest goldsmith to have it repaired. He scratched it on the touchstone and looked at her face. "Madam, this is not pure gold; it appears to be only gold-plated. I don't think it can be repaired."

Hema's face fell. She looked small in front of the goldsmith. The jeweller had cheated her! And she should not allow him to go scot-free. She went home, fetched the bill, and stomped into the jewellery shop. "You thought, you could cheat me, did you?" she shouted at the owner angrily. "Is it your normal practice to palm off artificial gold for real gold? Three thousand rupees for three sovereigns of fake gold! Shall I call the police?" she continued to shout at him to the hearing of other customers.

"Please don't shout, madam!" the shop owner was stern. "Why don't you tell me what exactly has happened? The police are not exclusively for you; they'll come if we call them as well!"

Hema threw the necklace in f-

of him. He took it in his hand and examined it carefully. "This was not sold from this shop!" he remarked. He then picked up the bill. "The bill is for three sovereigns. Let me weigh the necklace," said the shop owner. "Five sovereigns! But the bill says three sovereigns. How do you say that you had bought it here?"

Hema was stupefied. She could not utter a word. "Shall I call the police and complain that you are trying to cheat us?" the shop owner stared at her. "Madam, you would better leave the place quick! Here, take away the necklace and the bill!"

On her way, Hema thought: 'It must have been deliberately done! Writing three sovereigns, instead of five. And I prevented Hari from pointing out the discrepancy! What a fool I was! And we've lost three thousand rupees!'

When she got back home, she told Hari of all that had happened. "Don't

be overconfident about all your tricks, Hema!" he remarked. "But why all this farce? When mother and sister wished to come here, you feigned that you had fever! As if I didn't know! Then when I invited them over here and wished to give them a sari each, you wanted to spend that money for a necklace worth five thousand rupees, so that I won't be left with any money to buy saris for them. Then what happened? It looks as though you don't have an iota of affection for my people."

"What you say is true, Hari," confessed Hema. "We lost three thousand rupees, all because of my greed and lack of consideration for your mother and sister. It was been a good lesson for me. Please ask them to come over and present them with a silk sari each before they go back. No, I don't think I'll have a sari now. I've enough and plenty."

"Ah! What a change of heart, Hema!" said Hari.



HEALTH IS WEALTH



Ramdas was suffering from a severe cold and cough. His eyes were burning; he had headache; and the whole body was paining. He became restless. He called his son and said, "You go to the doctor and get me some medicines. Tell him that I'm not able to walk. Ask him to give me some good medicines."

Subhas went to the doctor, told him about his father's illness, and brought the medicines he had prescribed. Ramdas took the medicines. The next day, he felt some relief. The fever had come down, but the body was still paining. He doubted whether the boy would not have told the doctor about the pain all over his body. He managed to walk to the doctor's house and complained about the pain. "That's the effect of the cold

you have," said the doctor. "As long as it persists, you'll have headache, throat pain, and body pain. Once the cold goes away, the pain will also vanish. Continue to take the medicines I had sent yesterday and take rest; you should be all right, soon."

Ramdas came back. He thought, if only he had remained at home and rested, instead of straining himself by walking up to the doctor's place, he would have by now been relieved of most of the pain. Actually, he felt worse. However, he abided by the doctor's instructions and rested for a week. Still, the body ache remained, though not so acute as he had felt the previous week. He thought he could walk around the house. But he fell down and suffered a sprain on the foot. His people applied some

medicated oil, fomented the area when the pain did not subside, and even called in a *tantri* who gave him a *tajisman*. There was no relief. He was once again bed-ridden. He was thoroughly dejected.

Word spread that Ramdas had met with an accident and that he was bed-ridden. Many of his friends called on him and enquired after his progress. They were all sad when they saw him lying in bed. They were heard remarking : "What a pity! He was, not long ago, walking on both legs, but look at his fate now!" The number of his visitors only increased. In fact many people came a second time, and a third time as well.

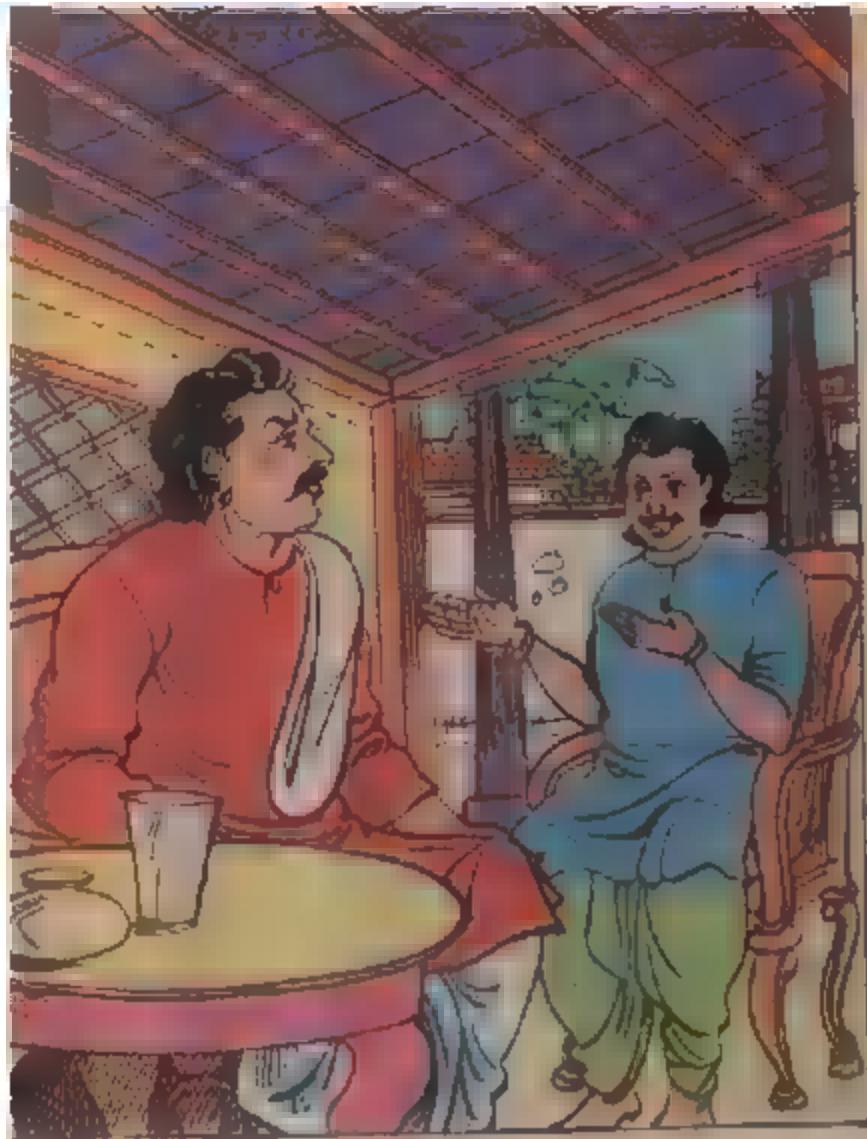
Before many days passed, he suffered more ailments. First he had ear-ache, then stomach-ache, then he had chest pain. The doctor was sent for. He examined him thoroughly. "Don't worry, Ramdas, you just have gas trouble. I shall send some medicines, you'll be all right soon!" he consoled him. In actuality, Ramdas continued to suffer from one pain or another.

Some of his well-wishers suggested that he should be shown to a magician. They suspected that he had come under the influence of some spirits, and that a good magician would be able to rid him of the spirits who might have taken possession of his body. They said Mallayya was a capable magician. Someone offered to go and fetch him from his residence.



Mallayya examined him and was convinced of the presence of spirits in his body. He drew a diagram on the floor with rice powder, chanted some *mantras*, even killed a cock and smeared the cot on which Ramdas was lying with its blood.

However, all this abracadabra did not work. Ramdas continued to suffer from all kinds of pain for more than a year. Because of his popularity, news about his queer illness spread far and wide. His sister and brother-in-law, who were residents of another country, came to look him up. Krishnadas asked searching questions about his brother-in-law's ailments. "I'm ill always. I don't get relief even for one day. I take all sorts of medicines, but



they haven't done any good to me. I don't know what I should do. In fact, I'm waiting for my end any day!" he wailed.

"No," said Krishnadas, "there's no need to feel dejected or frustrated. Ramdas, you're not that old to be ready for the "final call" and all that. You're only around fifty, and you've many more years of life. You should not worry unnecessarily." The brother-in-law tried to give him some consolation and comfort.

"What you say may be true," said Ramdas, trying to put on a faint smile, "but the fact remains that there's no change in my condition, which is only getting worse day by day. I'm left to suffer, that's all!"

"It's this anxiety that is causing all the worry to you, Ramdas," observed Krishnadas. "Just try to forget your illness. If you go on ruminating about your ailments, then no medicine will have any effect. Much depends on one's daily routine and habits."

"Is that so?" Ramdas said. There was a glimmer of hope on his face. "What are these habits? Tell me, please!"

"Take my own case for instance," began Krishnadas. "I don't easily get any illness. For one thing, I don't eat anything from outside. Even at home, I eat only a limited quantity. After I eat, I am always left with the feeling that I could have eaten a little more. If I were to eat a little extra on occasions like a festival day, then I observe complete fast the next day. I have sound sleep every day. That does not mean I sleep the whole day. I go to bed only when I really feel sleepy. If I work hard during the day I'm sure to get good sleep. And I don't do any work in a hurry. I take time to do it, so that I make it as perfect as possible. I don't wait for results, either. Whatever I do, I do with all sincerity. I don't get angry; I don't hate anyone; I'm not jealous of anybody; I avoid quarrelling with anyone. I don't ever think of taking revenge on another. All that will only give me tension. I avoid tension and that takes care of my health."

"I shall follow your example,

Krishnadas," said Ramdas, getting up from his bed. "From tomorrow I shall abide by your advice."

"Many of my friends warn me about the way I go about my daily routine," said Krishnadas. "But I'm not bothered. I try to rein in my mind. But don't emulate me in everything. You may attempt whatever is possible. One after another, all your ailments will vanish."

After Krishnadas went away, Ramdas discussed his advice about one's habits with his friends. "You don't lack anything, Ramdas. You look perfectly all right," they invariably told him. Ramdas soon realised that they were only flattering him. He then consulted his doctor.

"I know of one Sivadas here," said the doctor. "He's over sixty. But I've never seen him afflicted by any ailment. He goes about his work briskly. He had had no occasion to come to me for treatment. I think you should meet Sivadas."

The next day, Ramdas went in search of Sivadas. He was sitting in the porch of his house. Some prominent people of the locality were with him at that time. One of them was telling him : "I had arranged for a music recital in my place and had sent you an invitation. Why didn't you come?"

Sivadas said, apologetically. "Sorry, sir, I couldn't come. That day I had severe cough, and I didn't want



to make a nuisance of myself by coughing in the middle of the recital. That would have spoiled the show. Please bear with me."

"How did you get rid of your cough, then?" the gentlemen asked him.

"The next day I drank a lot of water boiled with *tulsi* leaves," replied Sivadas.

"That reminds me," said another gentleman. "why didn't you come for my brother's wedding?"

"Oh! That day I had a bad cold," said Sivadas. "I didn't want to be seen sneezing all the while! I remained at home and fasted the whole day. By evening I was all right."

Ramdas was listening to all this conversation. He realised that he too

had the same ailments as those Sivadas suffered from. But he never went to a doctor for medicines. He had some simple home-made remedies.

"Do you have any doubts to clear?" Sivadas asked him when Ramdas was left alone after all the other visitors had gone away.

"I do, sir," said Ramdas. "Recently, I was also suffering from cold, fever, and cough and I was taking medicines prescribed by the doctor. But you don't seem to have consulted any doctor when you were ill."

"You've already heard what I said about my cough and cold," said Sivadas. "Minor ailments like cold and cough do not need a doctor's medicines or treatment. Don't give any prominence to one's ailments; take them in your stride, and think of simple remedies. The sky will not fall down if you fast for a day!"

"What about major diseases?" queried Ramdas.

"All of them will need treatment," said Sivadas. "If you can ward off minor ailments, you can be free of major ones. And never consider yourself as a sick person."

"That's what had happened in my case, sir!" confessed Ramdas. "I thought I would not be cured, so I lay down and never left my bed. And that brought visitors to me, and they all thought I was really sick! Anyway after meeting you, I feel much relieved, and much better."

"To be frank, I'm afraid I'm going in for some headache!" said Sivadas. "But it doesn't matter, I can sleep it off!"

Ramdas went back smiling. He never fell ill afterwards. In fact, whenever he had headache or stomach-ache, he did not tell others about it. He took rest at home and cured himself. "Look at Ramdas! For once he is hale and hearty!" his friends remarked.



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